PlayStation Magazine ON THE CD

20 PLAYABLE PLAYSTATION DEMOS
METAL GEAR SOLID, COOL BOARDERS 3, MAX POWER RACING, S.C.A.R.S. & 16 MORE!

PlayStation

FEBRUARY 1999 £4.99

Official UK PlayStation Magazine 42

METAL GEAR SOLID

OUR BIGGEST PLAYABLE DEMO EVER!

First UK review plus all-new double-sized playable demo!

BIGGEST DISC EVER! 22 EXCLUSIVE DEMOS!

PREVIEW!

RIDGE RACER 4

The full lowdown on Namco's greatest racer!
PLUS! The latest on Soul Reaver!

ROUND-UP!

FOOTBALL FOCUS

Premier Manager '99, Sensible Soccer, Player Manager 98-99, Viva Football – ALL INSIDE!

REVIEWED!

DODGEM ARENA
MAX POWER RACING
AKUJI THE HEARTLESS
PLAYER MANAGER 98-99
SHANGHAI TRUE VALOR
SENSIBLE SOCCER
POOL HUSTLER
POY POY 2
HUGO

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WIPEOUT 3 • ALAN SHEARER • CRASH 3 TIPS • WIN A HUGE TELLY!

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Start up

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH'S CD?

Three words then. Happy new year. All hail PlayStation. Best disc ever. *Cool Boarders* thrills. Yaroze is boss. *Max Power* giveaway. *Devil Dice* AAARRGGH. *Metal Gear Solid. Metal Gear Solid. Me-*

PlayStation
PAL
PLAYABLE DEMOS 20
TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION
METAL GEAR SOLID
SPECIAL EDITION EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO
PlayStation Magazine
Future
PLAYABLE METAL GEAR SOLID / DEVIL DICE / COOL BOARDERS 3 / MAX POWER RACING / V-2000 / S.C.A.R.S. / YAROZE COMPILATION
VIDEO METAL GEAR SOLID / A BUG'S LIFE
PlayStation
TURN TO PAGE 147 FOR DETAILS

METAL GEAR SOLID — Playable
Bestest Game In The World Ever Ever? We think so but find out for yourself with *PSM*'s double-sized demo! You're welcome.

DEVIL DICE — Playable
The *Tetris*-beater preferred by Mr Beelzebub himself. Shudder.

COOL BOARDERS 3 — Playable
Snowy of demeanour and Puffa of jacket, this *is* snowboarding.

MAX POWER RACING — Playable
Beat our demo and win a huge TV! See page 13 for details.

V-2000 — Playable
Following on from retro classic *Virus*, *V-2000* is a sweet update.

S.C.A.R.S. — Playable
Ubi Soft's *Mario* clone is a four-player blast. Come see why.

YAROZE COMPILATION — Playable
Check out the very best of Net Yaroze with the FOURTEEN FULL GAMES in our Hall Of Fame. See page 151 for details.

METAL GEAR SOLID — Video
You've played it, now watch it.

A BUG'S LIFE — Video
Buggin' out big time is Disney's new ant-y-hero, Flik. Antmusic!

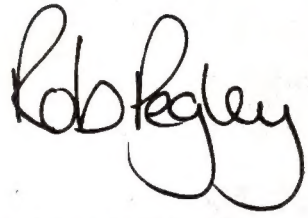
After 35 issues of the Pegley era there will be a fresh face grinning at you next month. Yep, I'm outta here – heading down under in search of sun, sea, sand, a decent cricket team and Natalie Imbruglia. Of course.

It's good to go out on a high though and it doesn't get much better than this. For starters, we have over 20 games on the CD. This includes 14 full Net Yaroze games to complement our feature on the exciting future for PlayStation programming. On a more professional level, this month's issue features two 'proper' titles which are as good as anything I've ever witnessed.

Ridge Racer 4 is previewed on page 38 and it is truly wonderful, looking even better than *Gran Turismo* did on its Japanese release. Naturally, an exclusive review and playable demo is on the cards, as per this month's cover game. It's only February, but *Metal Gear Solid* has already put in an early bid for Game of the Year. *PSM* proudly brings you the exclusive UK review on page 80 plus a double-sized playable demo.

Next month *PSM* will bring you yet another review/demo package of *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* (previewed on page 50), as the magazine continues to provide the only demos worth playing and the only reviews worth reading. It won't bring you my boyish good looks or nicely rounded signature but, hey, no worries...

G'day,



Rob Pegley (Outgoing Editor)

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HUGO
WIPEOUT 3 • ALAN SHEARER • CRASH 3 TIPS • WIN A HUGE TELLY!

Monaco Grand Prix

Prince Naseem Boxing

Premier Manager '99

PRIMAL SCREEN

Developers quizzed, boffins questioned, eggheads interrogated... The inside deal on the games you'll be buying in six months' time.

Monaco Grand Prix 42
Could this be the Schumacher to *F1*'s faltering Hakkinen? Start your game engines...

Prince Naseem Boxing 46
Quiet, unassuming, demure... Perchance not.

Retro Force 48
A retro rocker for the older skoolboy.

PREPLAY

A sneak peek at the games almost ready for the shelves. Is it looking good or is it looking grim? *PSM* gives you the lowdown.

Premier Manager '99 54
One of 1998's biggest hits gets a fresh set of stats. Is it champ or chump?

Warzone 2100 56
Command & Conquer with 3D knobs on. Altogether now, "Hive kankered weurlds..."

WCW Thunder 58
Of Lycra, leverage and, um, lovebites. You know what we mean. Maybe.

Bloodlines 59
Four-player fest from the far future.

Global Domination 62
In which you dominate a globe.

Running Wild 63
Anthropomorphic antics in this sprint 'em up.

Tank Racer 64
Shells! Camouflage paint! Thick armour plating! Yup, it's Turret's Syndrome...

Eliminator 66
Psygnosis gives us that most unlikely of beasts – the *Dodgem Arena* clone...

Monster Seed 68
Play foster daddy to Godzilla in this monster breeding RPG. Only in Japan...

Swing 69
Egghead-friendly puzzler that's like "juggling in an abacus." Yes.

Fact: *The Official UK PlayStation Magazine* is the world's best-selling videogames magazine. The only magazine with an Official demo CD each and every month, *PSM* is also the best written and most clearly designed magazine on the shelves. This market-leading position means that we can review games honestly and protect our readers interests, giving real opinions rather than compromise our views in pursuit of an exclusive review or cover.

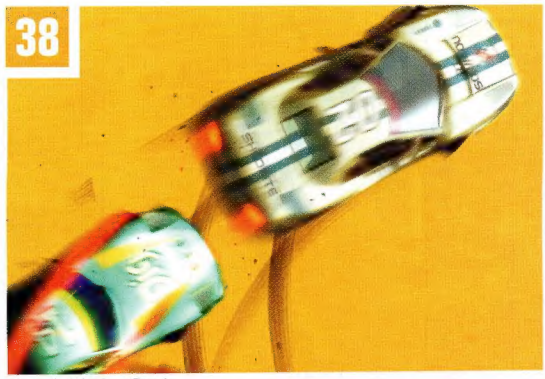
PSM is the only magazine which really matters within the PlayStation industry for one reason – what we print is the truth. Whether it's about games, the industry and all things PlayStation, our writing is opinionated, honest and always informed. Links with Sony provide exclusive information and game demos, but do not compromise our editorial stance. *PSM* is 100 per cent editorially independent – guaranteed.

PSM is written in an adult, entertaining manner. Free from technical jargon, but with the necessary expertise that PlayStation owners demand, *PSM* drops the usual in-jokes and infantile humour for quality. We tell you the latest news, talk to the most important people in the industry, discuss the most relevant issues and review the most exciting games on the planet. And with our demo disc, we let you play exclusive levels from the best PlayStation games *before* they hit the shelves. *PSM*: the world's best-selling videogames magazine. Fact.

Warzone 2100

WCW Thunder

Do it Yourself



First Look: *Ridge Racer Type 4*

Analysis: *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver*

Metal Gear Solid

Akuji The Heartless

Max Power Racing

PLAYTEST

You want reviews? You want them informed, authoritative, opinionated, entertaining, clever and unbearably honest? You got 'em.

Metal Gear Solid 80
At long *long* last, Konami's sneak 'em up hits the UK. Come see the future.

Akuji The Heartless 90
Black magic shenanigans with Eidos' voodoo rambler. Spooky!

Viva Football 92
The latest entrant in the footy sweepstakes.

Sensi Soccer 94
The *next* latest entrant in the footy sweepstakes. Only not as good.

Max Power Racing 96
Smash-happy racer with the lads mag license.

Poy Poy 2 102
The lil' fellas with the predisposition for group violence are trotted out for a rerun.

Dodgem Arena 104
Future sports runabout with a storming drum 'n' bass soundtrack. Bangin'!

Player Manager Season 98-99 106
Stattos rejoice! The game that reduces the beautiful game to numerical equations returns.

Shanghai True Valor 109
A night on the tiles guaranteed with this Mah Jongg-alike puzzler from the land of the rising pun.

Plus! 111
Reviews of *Pool Hustler* (not bad) and *Hugo* (not good).

FEATURES

First Look: Ridge Racer Type 4 38
Just out in Japan, *Ridge Racer Type 4* is looking to out-race even *Gran Turismo*. Come see what all the fuss is about.

Analysis: Soul Reaver 50
Is *Soul Reaver* really better than *Tomb Raider III* or does it, um, suck? *PSM* visited Crystal Dynamics' HQ to find out.

Do It Yourself 70
Fancy making your own PlayStation games? Welcome to the world of Net Yaroze...

REGULARS

Loading 6
Subscriptions 99
Top Secret MEGASTORES 115
Downloading 131
Games Directory 132
World Wide PlayStation plus Directory 141
Charts 142
Back Issues 146
On The CD 147
Letters 157
Next Month 160
Just The Fax 162

LOADING 1% COMPLETE

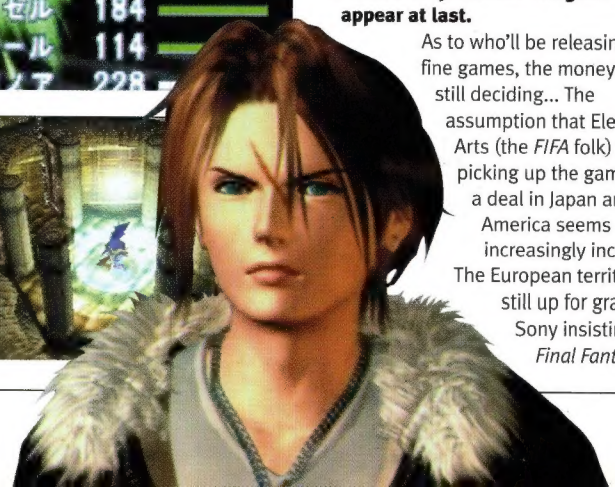
SQUARE DEALS

SQUARESOFT FINALLY READIES UK RELEASES

It's last year's news to Jap gamers but us Brits are yet to see 3D shoot 'em up *Einhander*. Likewise *Bushido Blade 2*, despite the success of the original. *Parasite Eve* is a superb modern day RPG denied UK release. Here's hoping it's released before it's chunky looks are totally out of date. *FFVIII* however is certain to appear.

Squaresoft has announced that – rather than channelling its considerable output through the bulging portals of the Sony machine – it will be founding its own office in the UK to look after its games exclusively. This good news sets the scene for a clutch of Square releases, the recent crop being denied UK release as wrangles with Sony and UK publishing rights continue. The last UK Square game being *Bushido Blade*, released over a year ago. Seems we can expect *Parasite Eve, Einhander, Brave Fencer, Bushido Blade 2, Xenogears* and perhaps even *Final Fantasy Tactics* and *Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon* to appear at last.

As to who'll be releasing these fine games, the money men are still deciding... The assumption that Electronic Arts (the *FIFA* folk) will be picking up the games after a deal in Japan and America seems increasingly incorrect. The European territory is still up for grabs with Sony insisting that *Final Fantasy VIII*



■ P9: *Wipeout* returns ■ P13: *Max Power* compo ■ P24: Jungle Brothers ■ P30: Alan Shearer
■ P10: *Beat Mania* ■ P16: News from Japan ■ P26: Booty ■ P32: *No Fear MB*
■ P11: Mr Sony PlayStation ■ P22: WIN A CAR! ■ P28: *Chiller Killers* ■ P33: Infogrames

RE-ENTER THE DRAGON

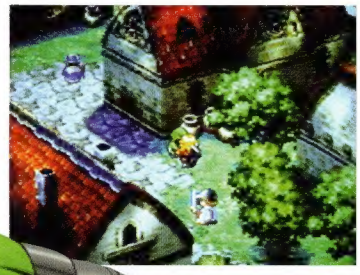
THE RETURN OF *DRAGONQUEST*

Impossible though it may sound there once was a series of RPGs that outsold *Final Fantasy*. First released on the Famicom back in 1986, ENIX's *DragonQuest* constantly outsold it's Square rival shifting over 20,000,000 units worldwide in comparison to *Final Fantasy's* pre-*FFVII* total of 18,500,000 units.

Seems the old battle is back on, ENIX is ready to finally unveil *DragonQuest VII* – the very first *DragonQuest* for PlayStation – in head to head competition with *FFVIII*.

Like *FFVII* did before it, the PlayStation allows the series to finally pop into 3D with the familiar *DragonQuest* hero – the appropriately named Hero – to wander freely with his tiny yellow dragon, Mary Belle (the feisty daughter of the town's head fisherman) and Keefer Gran (the Prince of Granestado and mentor of Hero). We kid you not.

It's pointy-hatted detail like this that has installed *DragonQuest VII* at the top of the Most Eagerly Awaited charts in Japanese PlayStation mags for the last year and a half. Whether this RPG-mania translates to the rest of the world waits to be seen but it looks like *Final Fantasy* has finally got itself a rival.



***Final Fantasy Tactics* was treated to a full American translation but still no UK release! And will Chocobo finally make it over here?**

(the cream of the Square crop) will be 'the next Square game released by Sony,' indicating non-ownership of the other games but a gritty intent to secure the jewel in the crown.

The subject of yet more 'no UK' rumours is Square's fighting feast *Ehrgeiz*. However, given the quality of the finished Japanese game we've been playing here at *PSM* we see this as being highly unlikely (and commercially suicidal).

Far shakier is the fate of the two new *Final Fantasy* games. These PlayStation remakes of *Final Fantasy IV* and *V*, available back in 1990 for Nintendo's 16-bit SNES have both been translated in English for an imminent release in the States. A UK release is therefore one step closer.

However, given the 'spong' target audience (the games being almost direct ports of the originals with all the cruddy graphics and sound intact) it's debatable whether they'll find favour over here.

And no Square news story would be complete without news of YET MORE Square releases. The first is *IS: Internal Section*, a game mooted to merge sound and graphics to create a highly original whole. At present it looks frighteningly like crusty old *Tempest*, though naming the different weapons after the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac is a nice touch.

Secondly there's *Cyberorg*, a sci-fi action game pairing third-person shooting with close-up fisticuffs, doubtless inspired by the free roaming combat of *Ehrgheiz*.

Thirdly – and most bizarrely – there's *Racing Lagoon*, a combination of racing game and RPG with a pleasing cyber-punk feel. It features an extension of the car customising theme of *R4* and *GT*, plenty of characters to play as, story-telling interaction between drivers and ever better tracks being unlocked with improved placings.

And finally, a release date for *Final Fantasy VIII* has been confirmed – 11 February in Japan – allowing us to get to grips with the monster at last. Expect the first full lowdown on the Japanese game in *PSM* soon.

The superb *Ehrgeiz* must get a UK release. *Internal Section's* mad blasting. *Cyberorg* the hi-tech fighter and *Racing Lagoon*.

Pssst!

Rumours milled, tittle tattled, whispers heard, gossip spread...

Think you know your games? BBC2 is looking for contestants to appear on a new Sunday morning 'interactive' game show. If you are aged between ten and 14 and have a bonce full of digital nonsense, write to Steve Berry at E400 East Tower, BBC Television Centre, Wood Lane, London W12 7RJ and tell him, in 100 words or less, what's your favourite game and why. Get scribbling yesterday... The new issue of pro comic fanzine *Wizard* carries a free *Future Cop: LAPD* mini-comic, paving the way for a full version from *Resi* comic producer, Wildstorm. Wot no *Metal Gear* comic from Image?... June sees the Japanese release of a sequel to funksome dance 'em up, *Bust A Groove*. Get them flares flappin' NOW... Activision has announced that it is working on a 3D *Spider-man* title. With worldwide comic book sales of over 15 million, interest is guaranteed. Whether it will appear in time to take on Titus' oft-mooted *Superman* game remains to be seen... Sticking with superhero antics, Activision has announced that its forthcoming 3D fighting game based on the *X-Men* will finally see the insides of PlayStations some time during autumn 1999... Also on the cards from Activision is *Civilization II*, the God-like PC smash. You control one of 27 civilisations, in an effort to ultimately leave the planet for space...

Pssst!

Rumours milled, tittle tattled, whispers heard, gossip spread...

THQ is going ballistic in the States with a multi-million dollar advertising campaign for the upcoming *Rugrats: Search For Reptar*, involving TV, magazines and radio demonstrations at the

Nickelodeon Theme Park in Orlando. It's unlikely that the same level of saturation will happen here... *Rampage 2: Universal Tour* is on its way, courtesy of Midway. Featuring four new characters – plus old ones – and involves slapping buildings and haranguing the military. Expect it early in 1999... ReSaurus, purveyor of fine quality plastic figurines is knocking out six *Gex* figures... According to whispering Japanese games buffs the sequel to *PaRappa The Rapper* may have less in common with the first game than originally thought. Titled *Unjammer Ramy*, it will ditch the rap vibe in favour of guitar-based rock. Oh dear. Expect it around May... The PocketStation has had its Japanese release put back a month. It should now be ready around 23 January... *Uprising X*, 3DO's PlayStation adaptation of the successful PC title, is on its way... Gossip has it that *Resident Evil 3* may be wildly different from the first two instalments. It's expected that the title will be much more challenging than previous efforts...

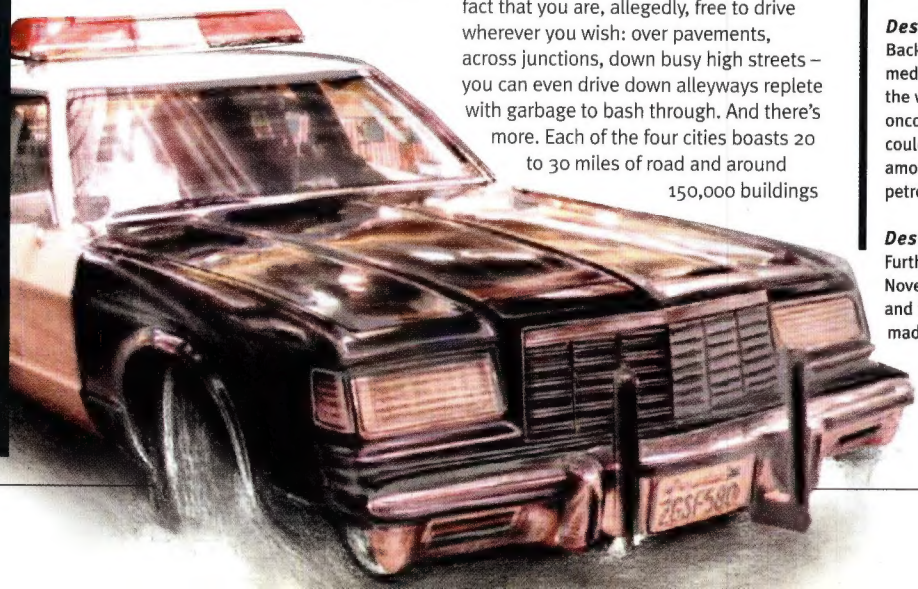
TOTALLY EXHAUSTING

DRIVER PREPARES TO LEAVE THE GARAGE

Looking impossibly funky, *Driver* purports to let you motor about huge cities, totally free to go where you please, as fast as you please. Begin choosing tan leather, lattice slip-ons, right about now. You're so money baby.

At long last. More news on Reflections' *Driver*, which since our Primal Screen (*PSM34*) has been arousing mucho anticipation among prospective *Bullits*. So here's the latest. It's expected around May. It's going to be released by GT Interactive. And it's looking remarkable. The title involves driving and plenty of it. In some ways, it bears comparison with *Grand Theft Auto*. Like the Take Two game, you bomb about getting missions from other characters and avoiding the long arm of the law. However, while *GTA* was a visual shambles, *Driver* looks to be a beautiful beast. Displaying the automated mayhem in high-res, the title now includes night sections and some highly impressive lighting effects.

Equally funky are the pedestrians. They mill about, walking, running or simply being boring and sedentary. Also chucked into the melee is a host of weather effects which will compromise both your vision and the car's handling. You play Tanner – an undercover cop posing as a getaway driver. In your effort to expose numerous wrong-doings you taz around Los Angeles and New York and take on San Francisco's iconic undulations. The real boon is the fact that you are, allegedly, free to drive wherever you wish: over pavements, across junctions, down busy high streets – you can even drive down alleyways replete with garbage to bash through. And there's more. Each of the four cities boasts 20 to 30 miles of road and around 150,000 buildings all depicted in high-res. The handbrake enables lunatic 180 degree-spins, you can direct your own car chases and the whole thing bounces along to a funkadelic retro soundtrack.



PAST GLORIES

Reflections is no novice to automotive PlayStation affairs as these two big babies contest.

***Destruction Derby* (*PSM1* – 7/10)**
Back in November 1995 this motorised medley proved that flooring a rusty jalopy the wrong way round a track into an oncoming wall of manned, speeding steel could be fun. Six tracks plus a stupid amount of rival cars equals a world of petroleum pain for sensitive souls.

***Destruction Derby 2* (*PSM13* – 9/10)**
Further windscreen shattering came in November 1996. More tracks, a pit option and further emphasis on actual racing made this sequel vastly superior to the original and subsequently a big hit. Even with the slightly more subtle competition-based ethic, it still entailed car carnage. Thankfully.

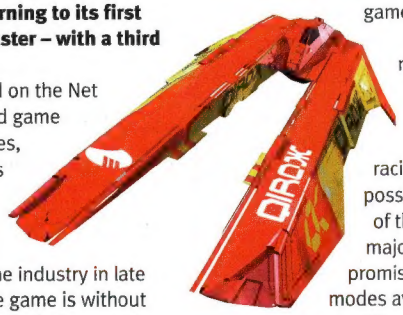
Not *Wipeout 3* at all, but the very first early mock-ups of *Wipeout* in fact. Hopefully *Wipeout 3* can finally attain the graphical promise shown here.

WIPEOUT RETURNS!

IT'S BACK TO THE SLEDS FOR *WIPEOUT 3*

After dabbling with new genres, pushing the boundaries of gaming and releasing some distinctly six out of ten software, Psygnosis has finally got the message and is returning to its first PlayStation blockbuster – with a third version of *Wipeout*.

Rumours surfaced on the Net about plans for a third game in the successful series, but only *PSM* has this exclusive info, ahead of an announcement to be made to the rest of the industry in late January. Currently, the game is without a name but the favourite (at Psygnosis and at *PSM*) is *Wipeout 3*, the exciting-sounding *Wipeout 2000* being ditched as this would mean the third game takes place 97 years before the second.



PSM can reveal that the new game will offer the split-screen two-player mode missing from both *Wipeout* and the sequel *Wipeout 2097*. Whether this will be at the expense of the superb link-up game isn't yet known.

There will be eight new tracks, with mirrored versions upping this total to 16 and five new racing teams, plus the possibility of the return of the old favourites. A major shake-up is promised for the game modes available. Single Race mode, Time Trial and Competition will be joined by a full-on Tournament, with multiplayers racking up points for placings in races in an attempt to lift a suitably cyber-styled trophy.

A whole new clutch of weaponry is on offer (details soon) and Designer's Republic, the team responsible for the logos and hi-tech look of the earlier games, is once more on board. Finally, that most important of *Wipeout* elements, the soundtrack, is again being created by a line-up of to be announced dancefloor all-stars. We'll have more *Wipeout 3* info, exclusively, as it is revealed.

WIPEOUT WISHLIST

While *Wipeout 3* is taking shape we thought we'd contribute our own list of features for the game. With any luck this little lot will be on board.

- Hi-res mode (512 x 240)
- 60 fps screen update
- Two-player link-up (four-player)
- Save to memory card
- Two secret tracks
- Rear-view mirror
- *GT*-style replay mode
- Craft customisation
- Compatibility with Namco's Jogcon™

wipEout 3

Pssst!

Rumours milled, tittle tattled, whispers heard, gossip spread...

989 Studios appears to be in the cockpit for the sequel to *WarHawk*. An all-new gaming engine is highly probable as the (uninvolved) developer Singletrac has the rights to the original... Namco's *Star Ixiom* allegedly incorporates strategic space shooting and is due for release on the PlayStation in the first half of 1999. It also features the return of the outsized insectoids from the classic coin-op favourite *Galaxian*... Adrenaline Entertainment is set to produce both a boxing game and a rodeo game... Square is planning an assault incorporating both art and music in 3D. *Internal Section* is in the style of *Tempest* – you traverse a tube blasting wildly at its inhabitants. It is supposed to have a kaleidoscopic feel... A 25-track CD featuring tunes from Namco's *Ridge Racer 4* is to be released in Japan. We don't know whether there are plans to subject the British to this daft electronic bonnet boogie as yet... EA's deal with Westwood Pacific is starting to bare fruit with *Sports Car GT*. Expect 45 licensed cars, authentic tracks, real time racing and a 'pink slip' option where players race each other for car ownership. More news next issue... Hudson Soft's *Bloody Roar 2* could soon be ripping things up on these windy shores. The arcade version sports far superior visuals to the first game, as well as the expected new characters and moves. How much of these things will actually make it on to the PlayStation version is still open for debate... Acclaim is getting revved up over its new racer – *Re-Volt* should weigh in with around 28 vehicles, 14 regular tracks and four multiplayer arenas, including a race through a super-market...

LOADING 15% COMPLETE

PSM PLAYS

As *PSM* males have their damp hair dried by fan-toting Milanese waitresses, Chocolate Buttons are nibbled and Absolut quaffed. On occasion, minds wander to videogames. These ones.

METAL GEAR SOLID

Make like a chameleon, while attempting to mate with bricks and soil. Avoid sweeping pupils of baddies or be impaled on heated gun-evacuation.

RIDGE RACER 4

Most mercurial mentertainment. Exhaust your automated apparatus about oscillating roadery in an effort to actually be the first place.

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

Depress elongated molars onto human neck bits to syphon life juice. Flap about shouting, "Boo, I'm a vampire, be scared..."

CRASH BANDICOOT 3

Mammalian mooching, with a hurdling bent. Prance, like hot vinegar has been squirted up your behind, while avoiding multifarious annoyances.

ASTEROIDS

"Put down that Asprey cane and walk," Jesus might have demanded of Mr *Asteroids*. The bouldered geriatric is back and he hasn't mislaid his pea-shooter laser.

KNOCKOUT KINGS

Apply traction engine-arms to soft face in an effort to render features bulbous. Flatley leg-work x leathery paws + opponent's visage = bloody canvas.

THE BEAT GOES ON

KONAMI'S *BEAT MANIA* GRIPS A NATION...

The easy excuse is to say 'only in Japan' and be done with it, but with an incredible half a million copies sold, the success of *Beat Mania* can no longer be consigned to the drawer marked 'Oriental Cult.' Despite ploughing considerable time and effort (and money) into promoting *Metal Gear Solid*, Konami is set to give *Beat Mania* a UK release this summer. Back over in Japan however, the phenomenon is gathering even more pace...

As reported in this issue's Orient Express (page 16), Konami is planning to follow up its *Beat-Mania*-for-nippers game *Pop 'n' Music* with a further 12 *Beat Mania* games in '99 – one of these being the add-on-disc-and-audio-CD combo pack, *3rd Mix*, again previewed last issue. As with every other game, a line of merchandise has already been launched, including *Beat Mania* record bags, CD players, bobble hats, T-shirts and even lighters.

Coolest of all though has to be ASCII's turntable controller. A cross between a Technics SL-1200 and a joypad, *PSM* can attest that the controller gives *Beat Mania* a new lease of life, but trainspotters should keep their eyes out for the newly-released limited edition variants. Featuring individual designs and buttons that light up when hit (oooh), there are three of these new models. The Foo3 is orange and designed by Groovisions, the Foo4 comes in white and was crafted by TGB, while the Foo5 is yellow and was lovingly sculpted by one Hibiki Tokiwa. Only 1,500 of each have been made, but expect more of these and other *Beat Mania* oddities to appear on a Booty page near you. That's providing *PSM* can persuade its lovely Japanese correspondent, Nicolas Di Costanzo, to beat the queues and send them over...

The Mania that is Beat births all manner of plastic shambles. Desirable tools for the non-disk jockey to attempt to get jiggy with, very much, it.

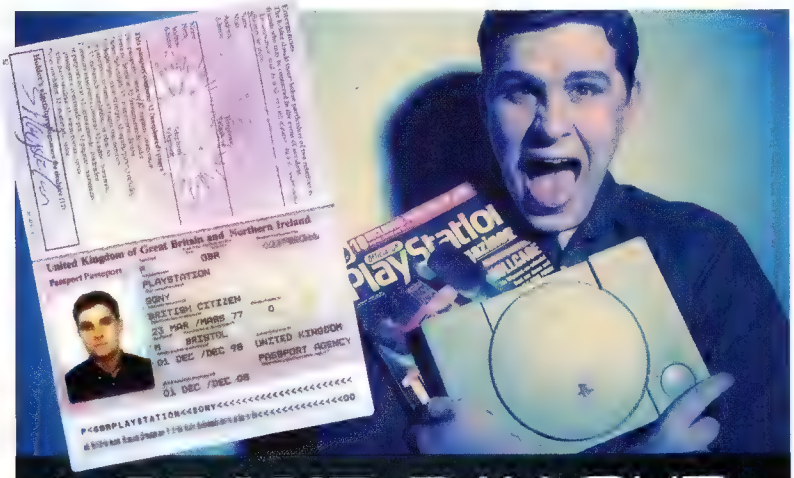
Tomb Raider 3

Vs

Pax Corpus

A PAIR OF LITHE SORTS, BOTH EAGER TO GAMBOL ACROSS APERTURES, GUNNING DOWN HOSTILES. HOWEVER, WHILE ONE CHAMPIONS THE CANVAS SHORT, THE OTHER FAVOURS THE TIN TRUNK. WHICH, PRAY, IS BEST?

GAME NAME	*Tomb Raider 3*	*Pax Corpus*
PRICE	£39.99	£29.99
PUBLISHED BY	Eidos	Cryo
WHAT'S THEIR HERITAGE	Eidos has already sired two previous incarnations of the vested posh. But it also excreted *Ninja, Fighting Force* and *Swag Man* into the digital melee.	A veritable humiliation of produce. *Versailles*, a historical point 'n' click adventure. And *Atlantis*, an adventure. Which was point 'n' click.
SO WHAT DO THESE BOUND-AROUNDS ACTUALLY ENTAIL?	Yah-hoo, unfulfilled by life of Port and macaroons straps on shooters 'n' shorts and legs it in search of dogs to kill and gold stuff to rob.	Kahlee an angular, futuristic bint, struts about corridors – occasionally ambiguous in their existence – pinging lasers at enemies who ignore her.
EXCLUSIVE TO PLAYSTATION?	Nay, nay. Beard-based PC types indulge too.	'Fraid so.
HOW SIMILAR ARE THEY?	Not at all. The Croftster frisks about like an oil-soaked, nude Bernard Manning down the Cresta Run. There are brain harvesting puzzles too.	Not at all. Kahlee cavorts like a dead sloth buried in an iron lung. The title's teasers would cause few problems for a drug-addled tramp who's sold half his brain to buy Brasso.
THE MOST INTERESTING FEATURE?	Cashing in on girl band, pseudo-Soho, fash paraphernalia, Lara attempts to get jiggy by having an earring stapled to her belly node.	So spaced out is Kahlee, that when her flapping limbs meet wall, one invariably gives. Result: chastity pants appears armless. Heh.
PSM SCORE?	10/10	2/10
WORTH BUYING?	Definitely. Pass over the requisite coinage today.	Only if the retailer accepts pebbles and twigs as currency.



A GRAND DAY OUT

It's the end of an era. *PSM* is sad and perhaps a little relieved, to bring A Grand Day Out to a close. Welcome to our last big cash prize winner and, we're sure you'll agree, we are going out with a bang with perhaps our barmiest coup yet.

Once upon a time John Sterling, a Computer Operator from Somerset was just a mere John. But after the familiar *PSM* promise of cash for lunacy he has changed his name to Sony PlayStation. That's right – Mr Sony PlayStation.

When news first reached us of this fruitcake's antics we were doubtful but examination of Mr P's passport (compete with bizarre S PlayStation signature) put us right. The man is a certified loon.

"I changed my name because I love the PlayStation. I play on my PlayStation so much that my mates call me Sony so I thought, hey, I might as well change my name to Sony PlayStation. I thought about for a couple of days and went ahead and did it. The solicitor's clerk was a witness and the whole thing was done in an afternoon. It's great," he told us.

"When I went back to work no-one could believe it. I must have had the whole company come and see me saying 'Let's get this straight, your name is Mr PlayStation? SONY PLAYSTATION?!' All my friends and family call me Sony. If they slip up and call me John I say 'No, the name's Sony'."

So what happens when the PlayStation is old hat then? Is another name change on the cards? "Oh yes. I love Sony gear. PlayStation 2, whatever. I'll change it," he assured us before challenging us to a game of *Soul Blade*, "I can beat anyone with Sophitia!" he gushed. And did.

We hereby declare the *PSM* wallet closed – unless you can think of anything more preposterous than this...

RAVING RETROSPECTIVE

Here are just a few of our previous Grand Day Out winners. Barking, the lot of them.

[1] Mr Yeomans from Cheshire did the decent thing and had Lara tattooed on his arm for £500. [2 - 3] We were inundated with hundreds of girls dressed as Lara Croft. They all got £100 each. [4] Colin Watkins engineered this fine hair art [and sported it] to grab himself £100. [5] And perhaps most famously of all, Mr May of Reading got married dressed as PaRappa. The reason? £1000 from *PSM*.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

A red pen, a black pen, one serious hangover and a typewriter with a bile-encrusted ribbon. PlayStation industry, beware...

A question. Do you shave? What about drive? Or drink? The reason we ask is that this Xmas saw the PlayStation go 100 per cent mass-market and reach a brand new generation of gamers. If you're a PlayStation young 'un, welcome aboard – we hope you enjoy what you read.

So a year of discovering *Tekken*, *Metal Gear* and *ISS* then? Not if certain companies had their way. See, just because you're young, some publishers think you don't deserve 'proper' games. Nope, for you there must be a diet of TV cash-ins, dubious film licences and 'amusing' titles with naff cartoon graphics. *Frenzy*, *Iznogoud*, *Space Jam*, *Hugo* (reviewed this issue)... All of them aimed at The Kids and all of them destined to be bought by over-concerned parents desperate that little Johnny isn't corrupted by nasty games.

And if Johnny's parents are reading this, for God's sake *don't* buy those titles unless you want to turn your child's brain into thought-free offal. Unless there's an age rating on the box, ALL games are for children just as ALL games are for adults. Titles such as *Metal Gear* and the *Final Fantasy* series have believable characters and complex plotlines – things that the majority of so-called kids' titles are woefully lacking. No one's suggesting your eight-year-old starts his or her PlayStation life on *Resident Evil 2* but believe us when we say rather that than *Rascal*.

1999 will see the release of titles based on *Bugs Bunny*, *Asterix* and even *Barbie*. If these are good games, then buy 'em. Crash Bandicoot isn't the most sophisticated of characters but he's the star of a superb game. BUT if they look like a pile of patronising guff with all the longevity of a *Ninja Turtles* calendar, then do your nippers a favour and buy them *Bust-A-Move 4* instead. See a game isn't just for Christmas, it's for a few months after as well...

20 motion riders • 16 burton boards • 34 new courses • 2 player downhill and half pipe action

"the peak of extremism for the couch outdoorsman." The Face

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

PlayStation

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JUST TYPICAL...

#11 IN OUR SERIES PROFILING THE INHABITANTS OF PLANET PLAYSTATION

THE MORAL CRUSADER

With rough tweed skirt cut below the knee and peat-hued twin-set and brogues, the moral crusader cuts a distinctly arable figure. Her cracked plaster complexion, teamed with acicular nose and chin, further define a beast who would not be out of place in a Victorian sideshow. She is the embodiment of ethicality. Integrity incarnate, chastity is her all – although it's never really been tested.

Name: Maude John Baggage
Age: 49, never been kissed
What does she get up to? Harassment, mostly. Tedious badgering and irritation.
Why so? She believes her ethical stance is the righteous way and should be applied to all: films, music, literature, art and, most recently, video games.
How is this achieved? It's not. She is viewed by all within the creative industries as a joke. Consequently her phone calls of complaint and letters of anguish provoke, initially, amusement, then boredom.
Is she aware of this? Seemingly not. As her perseverance never wanes. Interestingly though, Maude's Edwardian anger at society's affection for cartoon violence and unhinged destruction leads her to continually pester Jesus Christ for guidance, through prayer.
Any luck there? She's sure he'll get round to her when he's less busy.
Perchance some relaxation time? Yes. When not constructing anti-*Dead Or Alive* placards – 'Don't Beat The Teat' – she enjoys the songs of John Denver and the hilarious slapstick of BBC's Compo, Cleg and Foggy.
Anything else? Well, she did enjoy her position as Social Secretary of her local Horticultural Society. However, randy Squire Flute, owner of a nearby trout farm, popped his hand on her knee during a meeting. She took one look at his port-inflamed nose and hasn't been back.
So that's it then? Yep. Apart from her collection of Danish cinema classics – purely for research, of course. And a sack of suspicious rubber appliances.

Illustration: Made In Space (Ian Billington)

WIN A TELLY!

TAKE *MAX POWER*'S TIME TRIAL TO TRIUMPH

Things measured in inches are often exaggerated. Not the prize TV though, it's 28in of visual lovin'.

Another month, another storming compo. This time it's *Max Power Racing* from Eutechnyx which could soon become the focus of your relentless late night games playing.

Those of you who saw last month's *Rollcage* time-trial will know the form. Load up *Max Power Racing* from your demo disc, then take a spin around one lap of the track in your Toyota Supra. When you glide across the line in – no doubt – fine style, you will be rewarded with a time and a verification code. Send the code and the time to Eutechnyx at the address below, to be in with a chance of winning major goodies. Ignore the 31 January 1999 closing date on screen and make sure your entry arrives by 1 March 1999. For the country's most speedy amigo, there's a first prize of a Sony 28in Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound Widescreen TV, a Sony PlayStation Dual Shock Pack, and a copy of *Max Power Racing*. The four runners up will each get a copy of *Max Power Racing* too.

Here's the address for those tasty times...
***Max Power* Competition (*PSM*), Eutechnyx, Metro Centre East Business Park, Waterside Drive, Gateshead, Tyne And Wear NE11 9HU.**

LOADING 29% COMPLETE

ASTEROIDS CHALLENGE

SIX MEN, THREE DAYS AND A BROKEN RECORD

Ever wondered what it takes to get in *The Guinness Book of Records*? 72 hours of playing *Asteroids*, according to Web collective ClanUK.

Its six-man team has recently broken the record for continuous playing of a videogame by blasting away on Activision's re-vamped classic for three days solid. Quite an achievement, although not as thumb-breaking as it sounds, as each player only had to play for an hour at a time before handing over to the next man in line. Lives weren't a problem either – when players died they simply had to immediately restart. The record attempt was held in conjunction with Activision and the entire event was videoed for scrutiny by Guinness officials to make sure that the contestants didn't sneak off down the pub. Warning: the *PSM* team intend to destroy this record at a date in the near future.

Beat 'Em Up

The fourth *Kings Quest* barrels onto the PlayStation to try and banish thoughts of *Gran Turismo* and *TOCA 2*. Can it? Could be.

Nearly four million PlayStations sold which, if stacked end to end, would create an enormous line of PlayStations.

The much underrated comedy force that is Kenan & Kel. Seek out the astonishing *Good Burger* and laugh. Oh yes.

PSM scoops the WDUN Award for being the Best Mag In The Known Cosmos. And other places too.

Last month's fantastic Rollcage compo is becoming really rather heated. Current office best: 25.73. Can you do better? For a car!

BEAT 'EM UP

Hits and misses beamed direct from Planet PlayStation

KNOCK 'EM DOWN

EastEnders getting it wrong wrong WRONG by showing sprogs playing *Spyro* as a two-player game. Nice try, no cigar, *PSM* said smugly...

Hugo the abominable pixie. It's like *Metal Gear Solid* never happened.

Ridge Racer 4 JogCon. It's a bit – but not very – good.

Yaroze rip-offs. *Total Soccer* is better than *Sensible Soccer* and *Shanghai True Valor* is just about *Mah Jongg*. At forty quid a pop, shouldn't someone be trying harder?

The annual return of that old tabloid favourite, the Joypad Thumb. Bit short of news after Christmas, are we?

Knock 'Em Down

OLD SKOOL DAYS

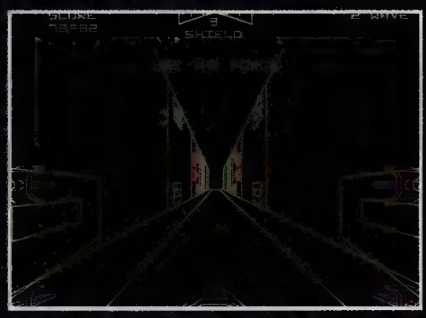
The cabinet commanded "Use the Force!," and who was I not to obey, for those were the years of George Lucas's trinity (Luke, Han and Holy Guinness). When you'd just had your internal organs detached by the speakers at the local Odeon what wouldn't every 11-year-old Jedi give to hop in an X-Wing and take on Mr Vader personally? The stage was set for the *Star Wars* coin-op to make its entrance.

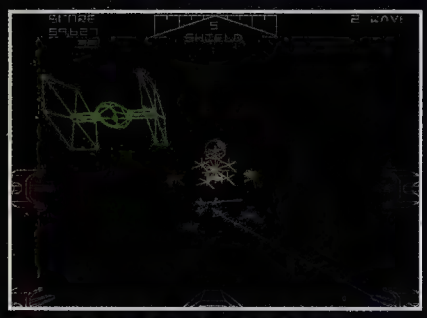
In a service station off some distant arm of the M1 the suggestive curve of the Death Star waited in the darkness. Never mind that its rudimentary vector graphics were just so many red and green lines, its every scribble exuded Imperial menace. Craning your neck to see over some spotty teenager's shoulder you'd witness the first wave of TIE fighters diving past, flashing their exoskeletons. It wasn't long before you reached the scene that was to burn its image into your soul. The trench.

Oh, the trench. The vanishing point perspective, the twirling asterisks, the gaping slot...

Despite the passing of the years, the imminent release of *The Phantom Menace* on celluloid, the polygonal *Star Wars Arcade* game (currently being re-vamped), and home titles *Rogue Squadron* and *Masters of Teras Kasi*, we still remember the gulf left after you had spent your last ten pence on blowing up the Death Star. Then you had to do it all again. Only with surface towers. Lots of 'em. It was enough to make you turn to the dark side or, in our case, buy a Commodore Vic 20. It amounts to the same thing.

Pete Wilton





Utilise the power of Sir Alec Guinness and guide your lasers into the slot of doom.

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Spyro the Dragon. Too hot to handle, get hold of a copy immediately.
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adventure game, but
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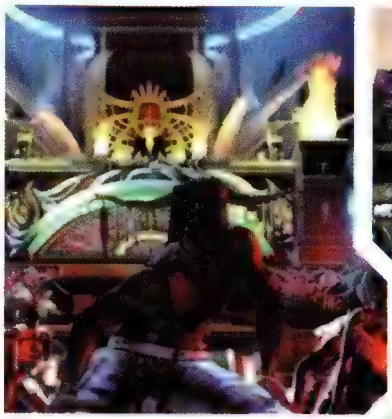
LOADING 36% COMPLETE

ORIENT EXPRESS

36 ON 136 OE プレイステーション。

NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S BIG IN JAPAN BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE? *PSM*'S MAN IN THE EAST, NICOLAS DI COSTANZO HAS THE INSIDE SCOOP. OTAKU BEWARE...



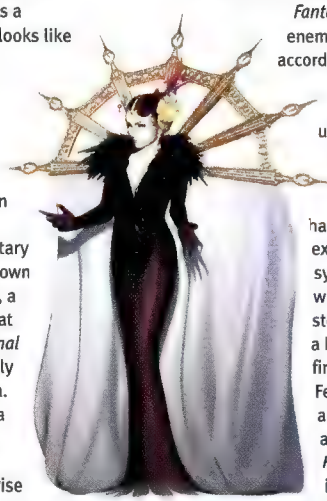
More top secret screens from *FFVIII*. Only a few weeks to go now...

IT'S COMING...

Just as UK games mags have been scrabbling around for info on the upcoming *Final Fantasy VIII*, so too have their Oriental equivalents. This month, Square has treated the Japanese games press to a whole host of new info on the long-awaited RPG. New characters and control system information have been released, while a superb new CGI movie has shown Squall and Linoa dancing – a romantic interlude somewhat darkened by the presence of the evil witch, Edea.

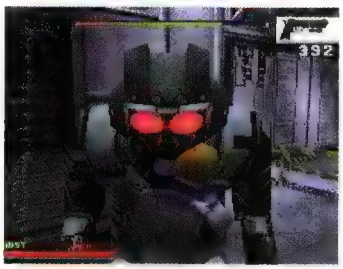
Five new characters have been revealed. Irvian Kinnears is a sensitive 17-year-old who looks like a cowboy and handles guns just as well. Kistic Tulip is a mysterious character whose age, skills, and even gender, is unknown – the only hard information being that she/he is a teacher at the Garden military academy. A similarly unknown property is Selphie Tilmitt, a fellow student of Squall's at the Garden; now run by *Final Fantasy* stalwart Cid. Finally comes the bizarre Moonba. A non-human, Moonba is a creature who lives in the desert and licks other creatures' blood to memorise them. Easily scared, but incredibly loyal, Moonba is the weirdest addition to the *FFVIII* cast yet. Also revealed is a new mysterious building. Constructed in the desert, it consists of three towers all linked by bridges and containing elevators that go down deep into the ground.

FFVIII's game system has also been overhauled. For example, in *Final Fantasy VII*, if a character was 'levelled-up,' the enemy's level stayed the same so a level-up was required to defeat him. In *Final Fantasy VIII* however, the enemy's level will change according to your character level. This new feature will avoid unbalanced battles and appeal to more inexperienced gamers. Square has also revealed examples of the 'draw' system (present in *FFVII*) which enables players to steal enemy magic after a battle. With the game finally released this February, Orient Express and *PSM* will bring you a full preview of *Final Fantasy VIII* as soon as it hits the shelves.



HUNGRY LIKE THE WOLF

Years after producing *El Viento* and *Sol-Feace* for the Mega Drive, estimable development crew Wolfteam is set to return to the world of consoles with 3D action title, *Cybernetic Empire*. One of the new breed of *Metal Gear* clones, *Cybernetic Empire*'s primary character is a commando whose objective is – surprise, surprise – to defeat a mysterious paramilitary organisation. Both joysticks of the Dual Force pad will be used to control the character, the left controlling both movements and horizontal view, with the right controlling the vertical. A vast array of items and weapons are available, including energy beams that enable you to pass or transport over obstacles. With most of the scenes set inside an underground base and plenty of NPCs popping up, *Metal Gear* could have a rival come March.



Old skool developers Wolfteam send in the clones with its *Metal Gear*-esque *Cybernetic Empire*. Can it topple Solid Snake and chums? Um, no.

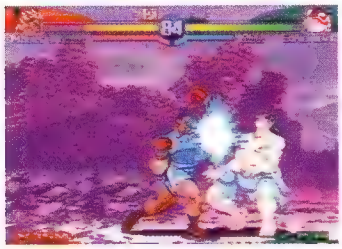
Characters old and new turn up for *Street Fighter Zero III*. FIGHT!

HEROES AND ZEROES

As *Rival Schools* proved, Capcom converts its arcade hits well. This year sees the conversion of *Street Fighter Zero III*, featuring the full coin-op quota of 25 characters – a collection of 18 classic characters (Ryu, Ken, Zangieff, Dhalsim, Chun-Li, and so on), plus seven new combatants. These include Cammy, E Honda, Blanka and Vega defecting from the *Street Fighter II X* series, plus Cody, a *Final Fight* character. The real news is the introduction of Karin, a female high school student who appears in the weekly Shueisha manga comic strip *Sakura Ganbaru*. Other characters include R Mika (the saucy female fighter from the original

Street Fighter Alpha III), plus Feilon, T-Hawk and D-Jay from *Street Fighter II*.

You can choose from three modes of combat – X-ISM, Z-ISM and V-ISM. X-ISM enables you to only use one combo and fight in a style similar to *Street Fighter II X* (ie only one gauge will be displayed). Z-ISM offers *Street Fighter Zero*-style fighting, with different combos and a total of three levels. Finally, V-ISM is the most complete mode, enabling fighters to use original *Street Fighter Alpha III* combos – or improved versions of *Street Fighter Alpha II* combos, as *SF* purists will realise. This feature was present in the arcade version but has been powered up for the PlayStation. It will be possible to set different parameters manually so players will be able to modify their chosen character to fit their way of fighting. *Street Fighter Zero III* will also be PocketStation compatible (players can download their favourite character and then train them on Sony's new gizmo), so it could be a good 1999 for beat 'em up freaks.



***SF Zero III* will be PocketStation compatible when it hits Japan.**

***Pop 'n' Music – Beat Mania* for the temporally challenged...**

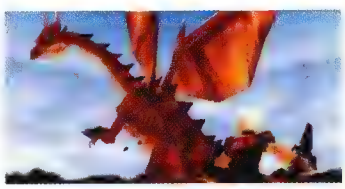
BEAT MANIA, UM, MANIA!

The *Beat Mania* craze that has so engulfed Japan continues apace with the release of *Pop 'n' Music* this February. Geared towards younger gamers rather than the hepsters usually associated with Konami's cool dance 'em up, the game sees *Beat Mania*'s DJ characters replaced by some cute manga-style characters, and the emphasis placed on co-operation rather than the turntable battles favoured by *Pop 'n' Music*'s older sibling. In total Konami are planning to release a mighty 12(!) *Beat Mania* titles over the coming year. Inevitably, expect more news next issue...

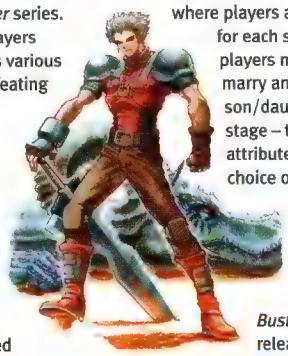
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

As *PSM* reported last month, Namco has decided to stop compiling its retro 2D games on *Classic Collections* and is giving them a 3D makeover for the PlayStation instead. After rejigging Super Famicom classic *Star Luster* as *Star Ixiom*, Namco has turned its attention to the *Dragon Buster* series. As with the original game, players must explore *Dragon Buster*'s various lands and clear stages by defeating dungeon-dwelling dragons. Scattered throughout the game are different puzzles, while the now-3D battle scenes will be strategy-based, players having to find their enemies' weak point to defeat them.

As per the original *Dragon Buster*, a hereditary system has been implemented where players assume new characters for each stage. In one stage, players must choose a girl to marry and play as their own son/daughter in the following stage – the new character's attributes decided by the original choice of spouse. Don't want to get married? Then you don't get to finish the game! Confirmed bachelors obviously won't care that *Dragon Buster* is due for release in mid 1999.



Bust a dragon with Namco's latest.



電撃 PlayStation DENGEKI CHARTS*

TOP 10 – SALES

1. *Winning Eleven 3* (Konami)
2. *Smash Court Tennis 2* (Namco)
3. *Legaia Densetsu* (SCE)
4. *The Mah Jongg* (SCE)
5. *Docapon* (Asmik)
6. *Parlor Pro 4 Pachinko* (Nihon Telenet)
7. *Beat Mania* (Konami)
8. *Conan* (Bandai)
9. *Metal Gear Solid* (Konami)
10. *Crash Bandicoot 3* (SCE)

TOP 10 – USERS' RANKING

1. *Final Fantasy VIII* (Square)
2. *Kidoosenshi Gundam* (Bandai)
3. *Tales Of Phantasia* (Namco)
4. *Saga Frontier 2* (Square)
5. *Genso Suikoden II* (Konami)
6. *To Heart* (Aquaplus)
7. *Next Generation: Robot Senki Brave Saga* (Takara)
8. *Ensemble* (Media World)
9. *Dragon Quest VII* (ENIX)
10. *Elie No Atelier* (Gust)

TOP 5 – READERS' RANKING

1. *Final Fantasy VII* (Square)
2. *Star Ocean: Second Story* (ENIX)
3. *Xenogears* (Square)
4. *Metal Gear Solid* (Konami)
5. *Tales Of Destiny* (Namco)

*Charts supplied by Dengeki Interactive. The top selling games chart represents the Japanese publication week.

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PlayStation

GOD ALMIGHTY!

GET CELESTIAL IN BULLFROG'S *POPULOUS*

Banish images of spotty, Top Man-clad PC boffins from your cerebellum, for the God game *Populous* is destined for the PlayStation – which, naturally, makes it supercool.

You are Shaman, blessed with numerous magical powers, and it is your destiny to lead and protect a tribe of followers throughout the trials conjured up by 25 different worlds. Your ultimate aim is – somewhat optimistically – to become a god. Yet, surprisingly, *Populous* really does offer such all-encompassing control. You can make use of armies, convert followers and even shape the land according to your will. And even this doesn't begin to tax the 26 varied spells that the Shaman has recourse to. You can also hammer unbelievers beyond belief, using lightning, lava pumping volcanoes, plagues of insects and settlement-engulfing earthquakes. Sexy.

All this daftness takes place on a true 3D spheroid, which means that you can view the action from almost any position, as well as being able to zoom out to a galactic position to observe the entire world.

The whole shebang is drizzled with real-time terrain-morphing effects and a funky tutorial, where your headmaster is himself a god. Those who have been aggrieved since birth by their inability to turn H2O into passable Lambrusco, may find this mildly intriguing.

Sweety box of visual delish it might not be, but *Populous* could offer all manner of brain meat-manipulation for those comfortable in beard and sandals.

IT SHOULD BE A GAME

ACTIVISION

IT'S *MOUNTAIN MAYHEM* FROM PETER DUFFY THAT REACHES THIS MONTH'S SUMMIT OF FICTITIOUS PLAYSTATION GAMES. THANKS TO ACTIVISION, WE POP A REAL GAME IN HIS KNAPSACK.

The Concept
Travel the world, scaling large mountains, beating off other bearded clamberers.

The Pitch
Firstly you must hire trustworthy sherpers (not unscrupulous thieves). Then mount an ascent from base camp. Hazards include drunken Scotsman throwing whisky bottles at you and singing Welshmen causing avalanches. Equipment to assist, includes an icepick, a grappling hook and snowballs. A two-player mode involves a split-screen race to the summit.

***PSM* verdict**
Incorporating Monty The Mountaineer, existing mountainous locations and an amusing use of regional stereotypes, *Mountain Mayhem* is a clear winner. Peter also makes mention of Yetis, mountain goats and rather implausibly, monkeys. Inspired stuff, young Peter.

Also of note this month: Andrew Deacon's *Paparazzi: The Game*, sneak about in an effort to snap minor celebs up to no good, while keeping an eye on your tiredness meter. William Duffy's *White Water*, a 3D canoeing sim beautifully designed and featuring it's own specialist joypad. And Silas Rayner's *Airport 2000*, build your own plane, shoot tanks with 'oosys', then return and build more planes. A purists vision there Silas. Well done all.

Top left: *Paparazzi*. Top Right: *White Water*. Bottom: *Airport 2000*.

The Calm Before...

THE STORM

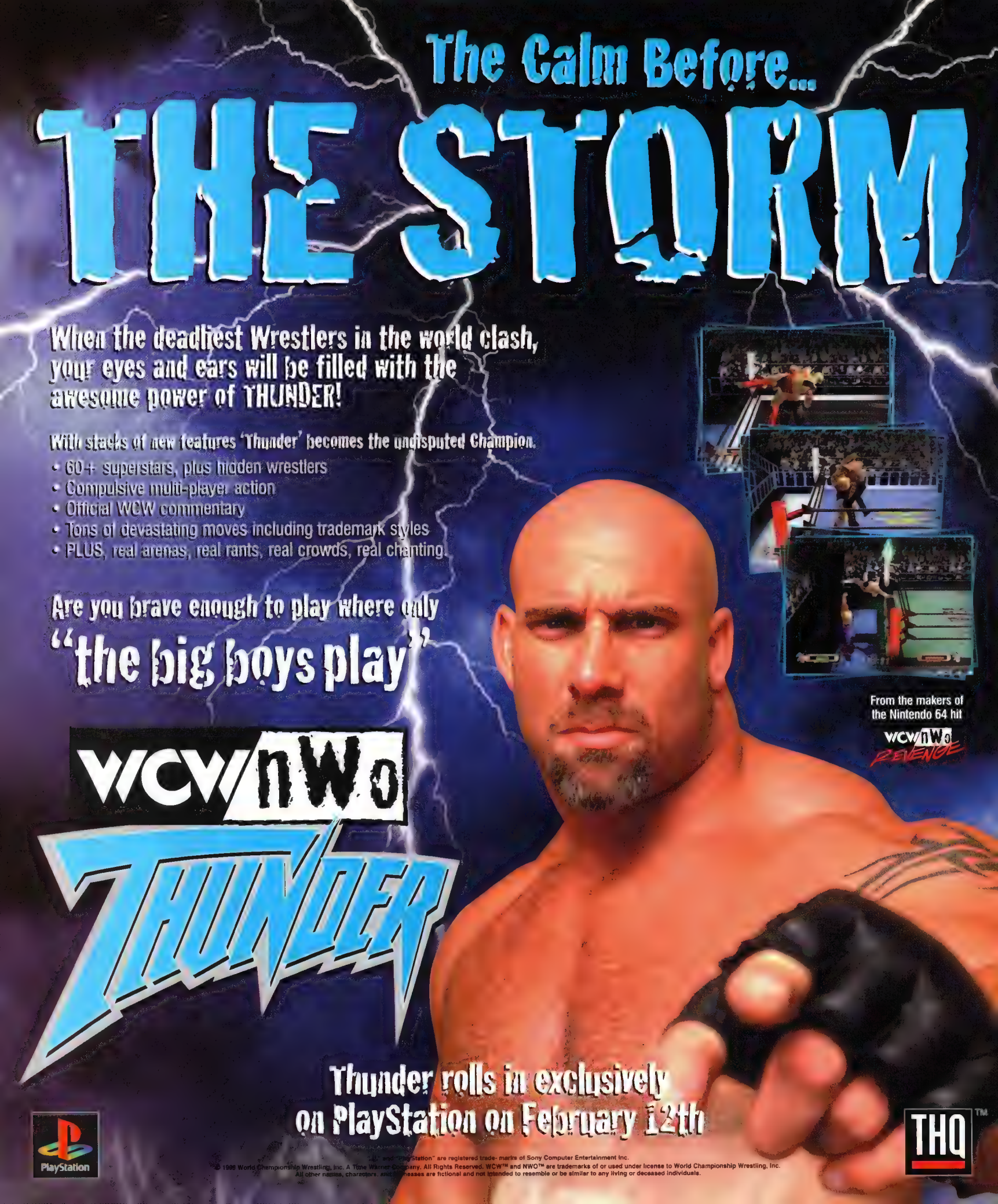
When the deadliest Wrestlers in the world clash, your eyes and ears will be filled with the awesome power of THUNDER!

With stacks of new features 'Thunder' becomes the undisputed Champion.

- 60+ superstars, plus hidden wrestlers
- Compulsive multi-player action
- Official WCW commentary
- Tons of devastating moves including trademark styles
- PLUS, real arenas, real rants, real crowds, real chanting.

Are you brave enough to play where only "the big boys play"

From the makers of the Nintendo 64 hit WCW/nWo REVENGE



WCW/nWo THUNDER

Thunder rolls in exclusively on PlayStation on February 12th

PlayStation

THQ™

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After conquering football Electronic Arts is to have a crack at cricket too.

WORLD OF SPORT

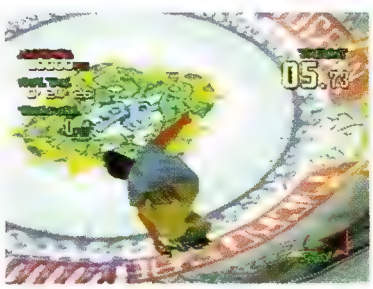
EA'S SKATEBOARDING AND CRICKET TITLES

As the ever-swelling tide of street urchins on mobile planks attests, the noble art that is skateboarding has grown from yoof cult to full-blown sport. With this wholesale sporting of voluminous shorts and unfettered use of the 'gnarly' word, EA has decided to do the decent thing and release a skateboarding game this April.

Licensed from Japanese developer Micro Cabin, *Street Skater* (originally titled *Street Boarder* in Japan) should do for concrete what the *Cool Boarders* franchise has done for snow. Replete with eight skaters, 20 custom boards and 200 plus moves, game modes include Street Tour and Freeskate, each coming with different performance levels and day and night settings. Those gnarly (ahem) enough can progress through the game, opening up many a hidden course. As with most EA games, an appropriate soundtrack has been lined up, featuring US punk luminaries Less Than Jake and Gas Huffer.

For those of a more sedentary nature, EA Sports has also picked up *Cricket World Cup '99* for release this summer. Developed by Horsham-based Creative Assembly, the game already boasts the hallmark licenses so beloved of EA Sports. Over 600 motion capture moves have been provided by England internationals, Adam and Ben Hollioake, while endorsement deals have also been tied up with England's Alec Stewart and Shaun Pollock from South Africa. Oh, and there's also the small matter of it being the only game to have the license for this summer's World Cup, a tournament with a guaranteed worldwide audience of over two billion armchair spinners!

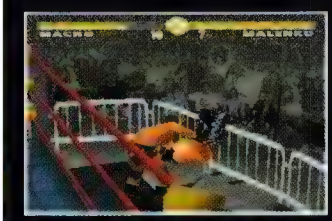
As a game, *Cricket World Cup '99* will be as realistic as possible. Real players, grounds and moves are backed up by accurate 3D ball physics, real spin on the ball, variable climates, management tactics, up-to-the-minute statistics, plus unlimited camera angles, including Stump Cam and Bowler's Eye Level. PlayStation buffs will revel in the more strategy-based Captain Mode, while first-timers will prefer the Pick Up And Play option. Expect more details and screen shots to appear in the next issue of *PSM*.

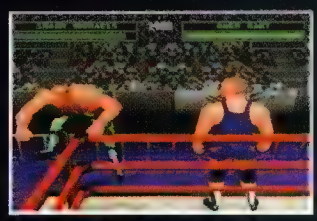


But cooler than cricket is *Street Skater*.

Genre-ly Speaking

Lesson #11 wrestling games





Nipples 'n' pants, oh the sublime pleasure of soft male flesh impacting with knees, canvas and rope. I've come over all funny.

By ripping out this page, rolling it up and leaving it in a glass of warm water for an hour, you can manufacture a knowledge beverage. Drinking it down will infuse your mental meats with all the games history a homme of the '90s could require. Alternatively, you could just read it.

Wrestling games eh? So we are obviously talking er... wrestling only as a game?
That's the general idea yes. However, while the more general bruiser-based games have managed to tap into thumping's inherent grace, this concept appears to have bypassed the world of bottled tan and swimsuits altogether.

How so?
Well, in general the titles suffer from a sluggish, nay lethargic, response to the player's dextrous demands (*WCW Nitro, PSM34*, 5/10). As a consequence one can occasionally feel rather less than totally involved in the sweaty, leathery fumbling.

They're a bit of a non-starter in the shops then?
Far from it. Releasing a wrestling title normally equates to big money in the bank. They usually reside in the higher echelons of the charts shortly after release and hang about till the next one takes over.

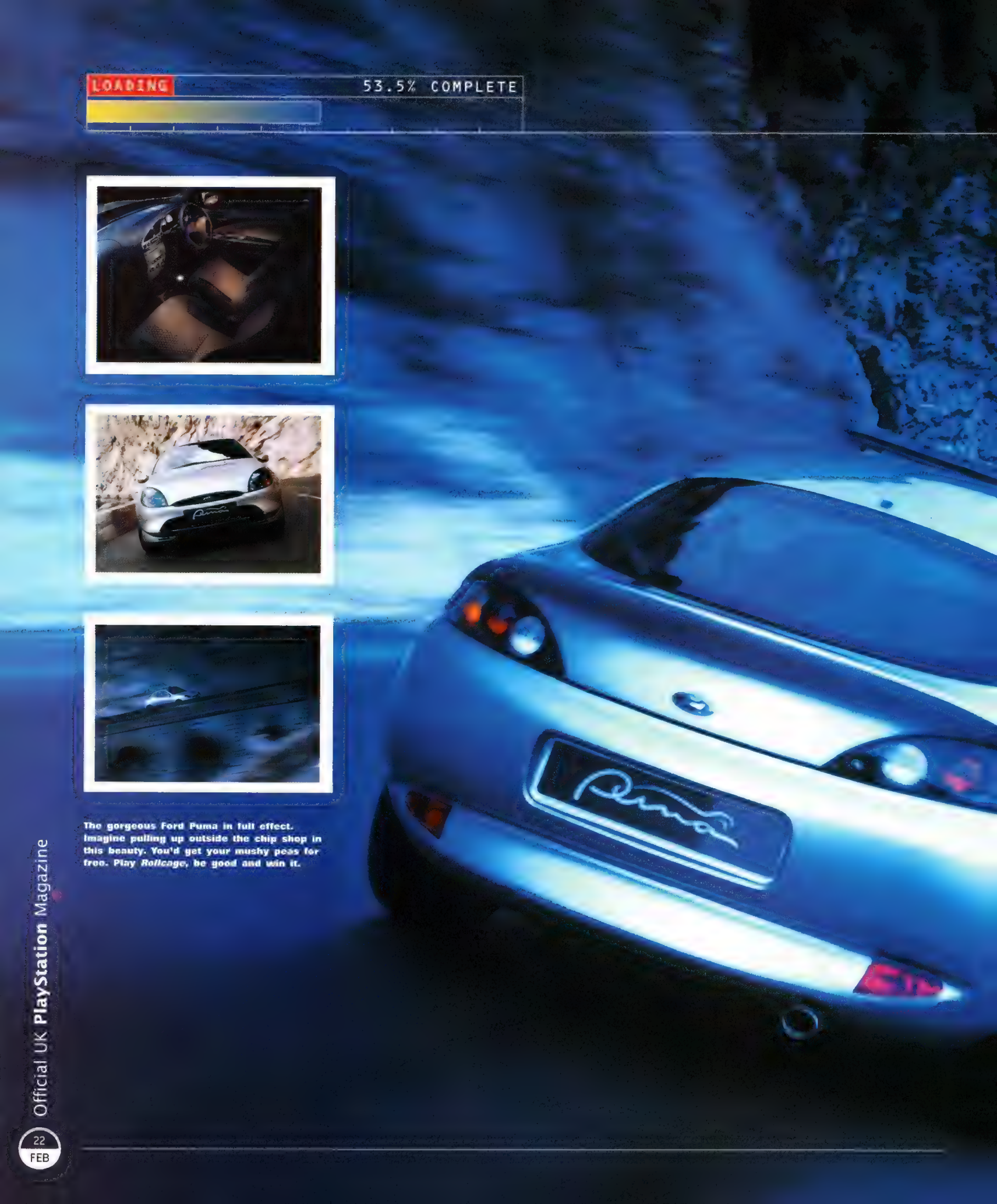
This seems a little perplexing?
From a gameplay point of view perhaps. But one must take into consideration the draw of the WWF and WCW licences. Rather like America, England appears to have sired its own mini-race of inbred, mind-mottled, Metallica freaks, with a penchant for idiocy and suspiciously eyeing livestock. It is these sorry souls who dig watching middle-aged men tickle each other. So with every new game release, the mulleted masses hare down to their local games emporium to be one of the lucky 50,000 who get, with the game, an autographed Stone Cold Steve Austin poster – for their lounge.

So have these games got no redeeming features?
Well, one has to admit they are not all that bad. *WWF War Zone* (*PSM37*, 7/10) was pretty good. And besides this, most PlayStation wrestlers feature a section in the front end comprised of rants.

Say what?
Real wrestlers pre-record verbal blathering of a self-promotional nature and the gamer is given the option to play back the nonsense to their eternal amusement. The screeching most often goes something like this...

"I'm (insert name here). I'm gonna bend yah, I'm gonna twist yah and when I've finished, I'm gonna bend yah some more. I'm the baddest, I'm the ruffest, no one can hurt me, I'm the shopkeeper of pain, do you want to make a purchase?"

Sounds like fun
It kind of is. Multiplayer slapathons can be distracting and hulking gentlemen trussed up like fruit is always amusing. If not for the unfortunate attempts at creating a gaming-grappling mechanic, wrestling would be perfect PlayStation fodder. But to seriously become respected, the gaming engine needs to be hugely refined. Oh, and sequinned leotards would have to become considerably more fashionable.



The gorgeous Ford Puma in full effect. Imagine pulling up outside the chip shop in this beauty. You'd get your mushy peas for free. Play *Rollcage*, be good and win it.

WIN

A FORD PUMA WITH *ROLLCAGE*

It's not often that a magazine gives away a car valued at over £15,000 and so we're giving you ANOTHER CHANCE to enter! YOU can win yourself a brand new Ford Puma by mastering our free playable demo of Psygnosis' forthcoming super racer *Rollcage*.

Last month we gave away the special playable competition demo of *Rollcage* on our coverdisc. At the end of the demo (a single-player time-trial lap) it dishes out a lap time and verification code (to stop you from cheating). If you haven't tried it yet, do so now. Simply place your best time and code on the coupon below and send it to the address shown. The top ten times will win their creators a place in the *Rollcage* Grand Final (at a date and venue to be announced) where they'll play off for the keys to the motor. And there'll be plenty of tasty prizes for the nine runners up too.

Not got last month's disc? You can order one from back issues (page 146) or wait until next month when we'll be running the demo again just for you latecomers. Get up, get into, get involved.

The gorgeous *Rollcage* in full effect. And just to save you from wasting a stamp, the best entries at present are under 28 seconds. Nowhere near? Best keep practising.

ROLLCAGE COMPETITION

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■ TELEPHONE NO.: _____

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The competition is open to all ages but please bear in mind that the first prize is a car and *PSM* in no way promotes sub-17 year-olds getting behind the wheel. This coupon will be examined by Psygnosis staff and the verification code used to check your claimed time. Any entries without a valid code will be disqualified. *PSM* or Psygnosis cannot be held responsible for any entries which are lost in transit to competition HQ. The ten fastest verified times will win their creators a place in the *Rollcage* Grand Final to be held late March '99 (exact date to be announced). If you are unable to attend your place will be filled by the next fastest competitor. Entries should be made using this form or a photocopy. Feel free to enter the competition as many times as you like if you subsequently better your entered time. Closing date for entries is 1 March 1999 though *PSM* reserves the right to extend this date should it deem necessary. The winners of Grand Final places will be contacted immediately after the closing date. Don't call us – we'll call you. We'll be keeping regular checks on the times to beat so watch this space. May the best drivers win.

LOADING 60.5% COMPLETE

MY FAVOURITE GAME

WORDS: **STEPHEN PIERCE**

JUNGLE FEVER

PSM MEETS UP WITH HIP-HOP LEGENDS THE JUNGLE BROTHERS TO TALK *PARAPPA*, CAPOEIRA AND THE POTENTIAL FOR A JBS GAME BASED ON *PREDATOR*...

With its flailing beats, rollercoaster basslines and ponderous, chanted verbiage, the Jungle Brothers' Straight Outta The Jungle (1988) was a revelation. Verbally horsewhipping hip-hop back into a position of cultural relevance, the JBs (along with regular collaborators De La Soul) were responsible for making dopeness less dopy. Fortunately, they haven't gone away, firing back into public consciousness last November, with Aphrodite's Urban Takeover mix of their classic Jungle Brother tune.

"Yeah, we've just come off touring," states JB number one, Mike G. "We're currently finishing up our next album. We got Alex from the Propellerheads to produce it and it's sounding serious. Here's an exclusive for you It's gonna be called The Brothers or VIP."

Any time for joypad action in this vibrant schedule?

"I kind of see it as a lifestyle accessory," Mike continues. "Like you can hang in the crib checking a major football game or a movie and then chill playing *Madden '99* or *NFL Quarterback*."

"My son's got a PlayStation and we play *Oddworld*, *WCW Wrestling* and *Bust A Groove*," pipes fellow b-boy Africa. "On one tour we did there was a PlayStation on the bus and we were playing that fighting game, with the Mexican fighting style capoeira [*Tekken 3*]. And like, that's like serious man, they should do a game like that, but just breakdancing. That was the origins of breakdancing. It was a battle."

When it comes down to a digital brawl, who's the baddest young brother?

"Oh you know, we're all pretty equal," offers Mike.

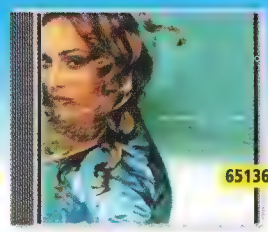
"Actually I'm best," returns a somewhat put-out Africa. "I got tha moves, man. I was messing everyone up."

What do the JBs make of the trend towards dance music/game hybrids?

"I've seen the TV advert for *Bust A Groove*," drawls Mike. "But I haven't played it yet – it looks cool. The only problem I see with using hip-hop in games is that you can lose the edge. If the music's cheesy, then that's no good."

"Oh I don't know, man," interjects Africa. "*PaRappa The Rapper* was cool. I don't really see how it can be a bad thing to have contemporary music in games, I reckon it's a great thing. You know that DJ game from Japan [*Beat Mania*] and *Music*, they like encourage kids to mess about and get into music. What's wrong about that?"

"In fact," Africa continues. "I got an idea myself for a game, it's kinda an action adventure set in the jungle. It's sort of the Jungle Brothers meets *Predator*. You gain accessories and loose accessories, it's kind of difficult to explain, I haven't sent it to any company's yet. Maybe I should."



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KNOCKOUT KINGS BOXING GLOVES

Prince of pugilism Lennox Lewis has applied his scrawl to these leather mittens. Win them and hit people's faces, for laughs.

RESIDENT EVIL COMIC

Rekindle your adoration for Leon, Claire and the nude fella with the hose-pipe tongue with this Yank version of the *Resident Evil* comic, nay graphic novella. A peek into the world of *Resident Evil 3*? One lucky winner will find out.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS DINKY CAR

Va, va, vooom! Drive this promo *Circuit Breakers* motor over chairs and desks with your hands. Stay out of sight though.

COLIN MCRAE WATCH & BAG

Become a real man like big Colin with this chunky masculine timepiece – featuring action strap – and this tough nylon pouchette. Slap on some Denim cologne and watch the ladies go wild.

ABE'S EXODDUS FUN TIME KIT

Booze goblets, playing cards and a beautifully crafted, plastic key fob all cruelly stamped with the abhorrent visage of Oddworld's Abraham.

WIN STUFF!

Oooh! The beauty. The texture. The odour of exclusive plastic tittle-tattle – which will ultimately end up as rudimentary loft insulation – yet initially appears to proffer a world of promise. Think on. Friends growing horns with jealous anger. Young girls draped on your glistening torso. And you standing proud in swimming trunks adorned with *PSM* boxing gloves and record sack, sipping from an exclusive beaker. It's the stuff of dreams.

Answer the following teaser correctly and those dreams could seem true. Whack your answer, your address and a stamp on a postcard and fire it off to Booty42 at the usual location. Closing date is 28 February '99. Ed's decision is final, no more than one entry, yada, yada, yada.

Q: Name the 1970's men's fragrance which had a martial arts theme.

IDEAS ABOVE THEIR PLAYSTATION

ANOTHER DIGITAL CADAVER SLOPS OUT OF THE CHARACTER ABATTOIR

Character: Cheesy
The gist: Risible, ersatz 3D rodent, gambols about striving to piece together various blobs of cheese in order to manufacture a spell. The idea being that said magic *fromage* will somehow defeat one quite deranged Doctor Chem.
Appearance: Lemon dog-faced mouse. Vivid green skate shorts and voluminous tangerine clogs inform the ugly hybrid's sartorial effort. While he curiously chooses to accessorise with a pair of white illusionists gloves.
Typical scene: The long nosed fool lumbers up a set of gothic style steps, springs off the end and lands buttock first on a hot candle. Rectal parts damaged beyond repair, the mammal buys it. Cue return to steps.
What went wrong? The implausible premise that necromancy could be conjured from the constituent part of a ploughman's. And the fact that the lead character is named after his favourite fodder. The equivalent is a man called FishFingers.
What's he doing now? After retiring from games in 1996, Cheesy, exploited his monicker by producing a number of camp Euro-garage singles – well received in numerous Danish leather discos. A brief job with Primula followed, before a break as a body-double in a risqué episode of *The Simpsons*, prompted a move to Hollywood. He is currently working on a TV screenplay entitled, *The Roquefort Files.*

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

EIDOS GOES FOOTBALL CRAZY WITH *UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE*

With *Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99* still riding high-ish in the charts, Eidos has decided to beef up its slice of the lucrative football market with the release this spring of a potentially *FIFA*-rivalling license, *UEFA Champions League.*

Developed by *WLS* developers Silicon Dreams, Eidos promises arcade quality animation, real-time commentary (provided by Bob Wilson, Ron Atkinson and Brian Moore) plus such flashes of realism as dynamic lighting, sampled crowd noise, weather conditions and shadow effects. In-game features are set to include all the stages, groups, stadiums and teams from this year's Champions League tournament while soccer nuts can play Fantasy Football and create classic matches between the 11 previous winners from 1960 onwards. Given that means pitting the 1968 Manchester United squad against the Liverpool side of 1977/78, Eidos could a real winner on its hands.

Alongside the Custom Tournament option is an Arcade Management mode which allows you to create your ideal dream team. Using players from any team in the game database pick your best defence, midfield and attack, save it onto a memory card and then pit it against your friend's choice.

Back in the real world, *UEFA Champions League* also features several Champions League Scenarios, where you're put in the place of a team teetering on the brink of defeat – Brondby 5:1 down to United with half an hour to go springing to mind. Can you save face? That's up to you...

As per *Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99*, Eidos has once again produced a title with a top license but after three previous soccer games, the choice of Silicon Dreams as developer (*Olympic Soccer, Soccer '97, World League Soccer*) can't help but raise a critical eyebrow. We'll put these questions to Silicon Dreams next issue when we'll have a Primal Screen on *UEFA Champions League.*

Super special early shots from Eidos' latest footy hopeful, *UEFA Champions League.* Um, bagsy not playing as Arsenal...

LOADING 73.5% COMPLETE

PLAYSTATION A-Z

G is for... **Gameplay**. The intangible concept which encompasses the act of playing and the software's inherent ability to entertain. If a title involves boring about performing the same polite relentlessly – gameplay will be weak. If on the other hand it involves fine tuning one of 144 different cars and entering it in 20 or so different races in an effort to garner more money – then gameplay is strong. It's a combination of variety, substance and well-designed, satisfying user interaction.

● Also... **Gold discs**. These are CD-ROMS produced on CD-ROM cutters – expensive devices that can actually write data onto special recordable CDs. 'Golds' are nowhere near as reliable as finished proper CDs but allow developers to 'cut a copy' of their game to send away for testing or review.

● Also... **Gouraud shading**. A clever trick, basically. It's the process of lightening and darkening points on a coloured object's surface, to give the impression of light and shade. The result? A single, flat, textureless polygon can appear curved, where hundreds of textured polygons may have been required to do the same job. Good examples are *Tobal No.1* (the hi-res flat fighters appear curvy and human-like) and *Final Fantasy VII* (the participants are given the dark-to-light once-over to imply depth). Named after its inventor Henri Gouraud. True that, you know.

Gouraud it up, landlord!

SPACE, HOW LONG CAN YOU GO?

MODIFIED MELD GALAXY CLASS DUDES WITH BASS BINS IN FIRST OUTING

While not likely to bond with the innards of your PlayStation until the year 2000, *Chiller Killers* – from virgin PlayStation developers Modified – deserves an early peek.

Chiller Killers is billed as a "futuristic 3D action game with a 24-channel evolving soundtrack." Confusing? Maybe, but things become a little clearer when you analyse Modified's non-PlayStation-related output – PC and Mac sound and image modification packages. The roots are there, but can a hybridised game/audio ensemble really cut it? Apparently 3D video mapping is being developed to attempt new levels of graphic realism. Allegedly, *Chiller Killers* will also use "fast first-person perspective 3D action with real-time video overlays." Mmm. *Chiller Killers* places you in the futuristic role of a rogue oxygen dealer. You tank across an urban landscape, on the hunt for new weaponry and transportation while avoiding contact with the space fuzz, said lawmen being a division of cosmic constabulary constructed from holograms. Serious immersion is promised as is music ranging from 'phat electronica' to 'drum 'n' bass trance.' Could this maelstrom of contemporary funk 'n' *Blade Runner*-esque visuals move the PlayStation onto a more cerebral plane? Wait and see.

Visuals from Modified's *Fuzzy Groove* for the Mac and PC. If *Chiller Killers* adopts the same vibe expect much goodness.

CAN I GET A WITLESS?

A GLUT OF ABSURD TITLES 'EXTENDS' THE RANGE OF GAMING CHOICE

The PlayStation is constantly deluged with racing, fighting and shooting games. Interestingly however, there appears to be a healthy, but subversive, underbelly of contrary games which eschew such everyday pursuits, in favour of the distinctly odd.

Due from ASCII this May, *Bass Landing* is not only the kind of nonsense fishing game that gets hick PC owners frothing all over their rayon shirts, but it comes blessed with its own fishing rod/joypad hybrid. An initial cast of said peripheral at *PSM* Towers has provoked much pleasure – expect a preview in next month's *PSM*.

Furthermore, the, um, *prestigious* pursuit that is rodeo looks set to infest the PlayStation too, courtesy of Adrenaline Entertainment. Little is known about the game, other than that the International Pro Rodeo Association license has apparently been acquired, and that Adrenaline has a history of producing left-field produce: to wit, 1987's *Ten Pin Alley* and the recent *Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling*. Fascinatingly, the latter game gives you the option to manufacture your own bowler. Presumably, a comprehensive darabase of garish clothing and twin-tone footwear have been included.

Unsurprisingly, the Japanese are not averse to manufacturing madness either. *Gallop Racer 2*, a horse racing sim, and *Densha De Go*, a – get this – train driving sim, being two of their tamer follies. Add to these the Pinball-for-salarymen delights of *Pachinko* and the pointless gambling pleasures of Interplay's *Caesars' Palace* and all becomes clear. While unlikely to find their way onto UK shelves, it's nice to know that alternatives to *Tekken et al* do exist – even if they do make most It Should Be A Game entries look sane by comparison...

Bowl with the ladees or sleep with the fishes. Expect a full PrePlay of ASCII's *Bass Landing* next issue. Gulp...

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LOADING ... 77% COMPLETE

WORLD OF SPORT

NEWCASTLE AND ENGLAND STRIKER ALAN SHEARER IS A WORLD CLASS FOOTBALLER. FEARED BY DEFENDERS, ADORED BY FANS AND EARNING A FANTASY-SIZED SALARY. YET HE STILL ENJOYS LIFE'S SIMPLE JOYS - LIKE *ACTUA SOCCER 3* AND *ACTUA GOLF*

We've all pretended to be Alan Shearer – lived out our boyhood fantasies through the blond-haired polygonal man leading England's attacks in *ISS Pro*, *Actua Soccer* or EA's *FIFA* games. We've sold the dummy to countless virtual defenders and buried the ball in the old onion bag on numerous occasions, following up a successful strike by mimicking Shearer's trademark open-palmed arm-aloft goal celebration. It's comforting to find, then, that the man we've been copying is not above a brief blast of PlayStation soccer himself.

"I have a PlayStation at home," Alan confesses. "It's a fun way to relax."

It seems it's all *Actua Soccer* chez Shearer, since that's the game he endorses. Which, in fact, is why we're here at the Park Lane Hilton; to take part in an *Actua Soccer 3* tournament. At this point *PSM* manages to extract a promise from Alan to play us later while asking him what he thinks of 'his' videogame.

"I do actually think it's a great game. It's very realistic which is the way I prefer it. The grounds and the kits are all accurate, you can choose different weather conditions and the tactics are the same as in the real sport, so it's all there."

So how does Shearer the videogame player compare to Shearer the striker?

"Well I've just about got to grips with *Actua Soccer 2* and now they bring a new one out. So, I'm not bad, but I'm better on the real pitch."

Which other games compete for time on the Shearer PlayStation?

"I play a lot of *Actua Golf*. Again, because I enjoy a decent round of golf, I like the realism of the game. Peter Alliss is always telling me I've gone into a hook. I have two little girls who are six and four and their favourite games are *Crash Bandicoot*, *Tomba* and the radio-controlled cars. I think it's a healthy thing for the kids, as long as they're not playing it every hour of the day."

We talk a little about what we'd include in our own football videogame. While *PSM* suggests a more complex system allowing more tactical control and running off the ball, Alan is adamant about what he'd like to see.

"Goals. As a striker I always want to score more goals, even when playing the PlayStation. The satisfaction of goalscoring is the best thing about football, for me."

During the World Cup, the PlayStation was a major source of entertainment for the players wishing to while away those long hours spent in hotel rooms and Alan was no exception. Back at Newcastle he doesn't tend to challenge his team-mates, perhaps because the likes of Robert Lee, Warren Barton and now ex-Newcastle midfielder Keith Gillespie are serious gamers, all eager to dole out a thrashing.

WORDS: Sam Richards **PICTURES:** ALLSPORT

It's not known whether Shearer's new strike partner is a PlayStation fan. Last November Ruud Gullit shelled out £8 million to make former Everton and Rangers big man Duncan Ferguson his first major signing. Newspaper rumours at the time suggested that Shearer had a hand in Gullit's decision. Is this true?

"Absolutely not. I don't interfere with the manager's business. But what I will say is that Newcastle has spent a lot of money on a very, very good player. Duncan is talented, he's strong and he's good on the floor as well as in the air. He'll cause problems and hopefully as a partnership we can make it work."

Alan already has an answer prepared for anyone brave enough to doubt the success of a Shearer/Ferguson front line.

"I played a season at Newcastle alongside Les Ferdinand – who people say is a similar player to Duncan Ferguson – and we scored nearly 60 goals between us. Honestly, it doesn't really bother me who I play with. I've played with a targetman, I've played with a nippy striker, I've played with a man that drops deep, I've played up front on my own, and I've been relatively successful in each case. There's nothing I can do about it anyway – the manager is the one who picks the team so I have to get along with whoever's selected and I'll do my best every time."

Even so, we may have to wait until next season to see the Shearer/Ferguson partnership make an assault on the Premiership title.

"Newcastle won't win the championship, I'll tell you that for free. I think Manchester United will, but Arsenal, Chelsea and Villa have a chance too."

It's not a controversial answer, but a considered opinion. You get the feeling that Shearer spends a lot of his time watching other teams, as though he sleeps football, eats football and drinks, well, a glass of football please, barman.

"Of course I enjoy a drink with the lads, or going to a restaurant with my wife, but I do spend much of my spare time involved in football-related things. I love playing the game and I love watching the game. It's all I know, really."

With that in mind, there must be plans already forming for a post-playing career. What about punditry, like Alan Hansen or Andy Gray? A former England captain and top scorer, Gary Lineker, has even gone on to become a respected presenter.

"Well good luck to Gary, I think he's great at what he does. But I'd like to try my hand at coaching first. And, although there's a good few years left, I'd like to end my playing career in the Premiership. There's no way I'm going to drop down into a lower league. I started at the top, and I'll finish at the top."

With that final, determined statement, Alan Shearer makes his excuses and says goodbye. Another appointment beckons and he politely backs his way out of *PSM*'s proposed *Actua Soccer 3* showdown, but then they've only got the unfamiliar PC version available and Alan's determined to leave the building the same as when he entered it – a winner.

***Actua Soccer 3* is available in shops now.**

Shearer shows another defender a clean pair of heels (above) and us (right) the game he endorses: *Actua Soccer 3*.

LOADING 88% COMPLETE

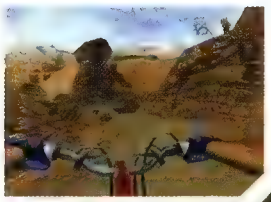
THINK ONCE, THINK TWICE, THINK BIKE

CODIES RETURNS FOR A SPOT OF MOUNTAIN BIKING

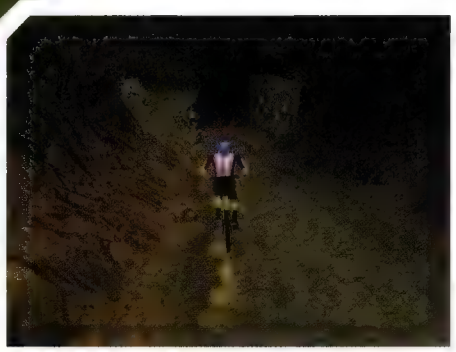
Continuing Codemasters' snowballing reputation for the more esoteric of titles, April sees the release of *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking*. Developed by Swedish funster UDS (creator of top PC racing title, *Ignition*), the game has also picked up the groovy licence for No Fear clothing. Expect on-screen bikers to sport the said fearsome threads *à la* the tiny babes in Psygnosis' *Psybadek*.

Back in the game, things are looking just as good. Set over downhill tracks across ten international locations such as Morocco and a volcanous Japan, players can adapt their bike's suspension and brakes to suit individual terrains and, of course, take corners at ballistic speed while elbowing any of 15 opponents out of the way.

"Oooh, look at me with my stretchy pants..." That'll be mountain biking for yer.



A variety of views from the *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking*. Anyone thinking of buying *Rushdown*, please refrain now...

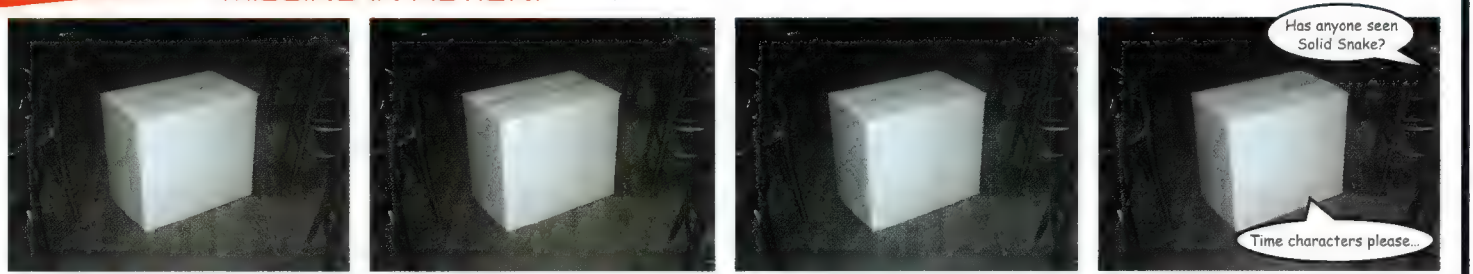


Codemasters also promises a spoke-related overload of options and modes, including single-player championships, one-off races, time trials and most importantly, multiplayer split-screen tournaments. Bolt on an optional first-person perspective plus a bangin' soundtrack, *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking* sounds the bomb. Unsurprisingly, Codemasters' marketing director, Mike Hayes agrees. "*No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking* will follow in the tradition of *Colin McRae Rally* and the *TOCA* titles combining realistic racing simulation with outstanding gameplay mechanics and will graphically set new standards," declares Hayes. "The game captures all the breathtaking excitement of mountain biking at break-neck speeds and we're confident that this will be one of the most wanted games for spring 1999."

After an early look one lucky *PSM* correspondent couldn't help but agree. See for yourself next issue with *PSM*'s exclusive Primal Screen interview with the Swedish developer.

PHOTO LOVE

MISSING IN ACTION!



A big thank you to The Garrick's Head, Bath.

SO WHO THE HELL IS: INFOGRAMES

YEAR FORMED: 1983
BASED: Lyon Headquarters – France. Companies in UK, United States, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Belgium.
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 500 plus involved in the production of games and around 800 employees worldwide.
KEY PEOPLE: Bruno Bonnell (chairman and CEO) and David Ward (chairman for Infogrames UK)

HISTORY: Infogrames was founded in France in 1983 and its first product was an educational software package called *Le Cube Informatique*, which sold around 60,000 copies. From this firm basis Infogrames could go on to develop more mass market games – such as the role-playing adventure game *Mandagore*. By 1985 Infogrames' success was on the increase and so it was inevitable that it would expand and start exporting products into Japan, the United Sates and, yes, even good old Blighty.

It was in 1989 that Infogrames released *Sim City*, the first game which allowed gamers to create and then govern an entire virtual city. The game – which sold 100,000 copies – was re-released on the PlayStation in 1996 as *Sim City 2000* (*PSM11*, 7/10). Other games which decorate the deepest, darkest walls of Infogrames' archive include *Advantage Tennis* and the template for a million games since, the seminal *Alone In The Dark*.

This was the first game to use the idea of static backdrops onto which polygonal characters minced and fought. Without this *Resident Evil* would be a mere twinkle in a horror-freak's eye.

More recently however, and after the wholesale acquisition of former giant Ocean Software in 1996, Infogrames was able to develop more games internally and increase its product range. You will probably remember Ocean for countless film licence games (*Lethal Weapon*), home computer arcade conversions (*Hunchback*) and such classics as *Daley Thompson's Decathlon, Batman, Head Over Heels* and the mighty *Worms*.

This merge proved to be very significant as Ocean had grown up with and actually helped to create the gaming scene in Europe, so the combination of these two weighty companies shortly after the PlayStation's release opened up many new and exciting possibilities. Ocean had been one of the earliest supporters of the PlayStation with titles like *Raiden* (*PSM2*, 7/10), *Tunnel B1* (*PSM10*, 8/10) anda rejigged *Worms* (*PSM2*, 7/10).

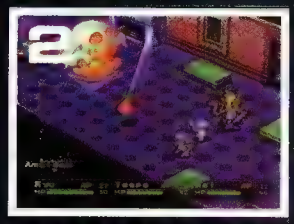
PRESENCE: The PlayStation market really kicked off for Infogrames with the release of the excellent *V-Rally*. This twitchy, skin-of-your-teeth rally racer shirked rallying rules (by having three cars on the track) but provided such a remarkable departure from the sticky-tyred likes of *Ridge Racer* that the punters lapped it up. To this day racing fans have a love-hate relationship with the game.

Breath Of Fire 3 saw eventual release after an interminable delay, as did *Heart Of Darkness*, official holder of 'The most delayed game of all time' title, coming home three years after its sell by date. And the pre-rendered 2D gameplay betrayed its age like a hairnet and a comfy monoslipper.

The sequel to the criminally overlooked *Total Drivin'* appeared as *Max Power Racing*, a licence lifted from the magazine for hairy men and chimps (see page 96). And future delights include the sequel to *V-Rally* (wait for it, *V-Rally 2*) and Anco finally managing not to soil its own shorts by using all that pent up soccer knowledge into a thoroughly playable (and pleasingly spoddy) football management sim. *Player Manager 98-99* is reviewed this issue on page 106. Well done everyone.

PLAYSTATION **PORTFOLIO**

HEART OF DARKNESS
Dash in a sideways fashion frazzling piles of squawking limbs with flapping laser prod. Then do it again. Then do it again. Then.....



BREATH OF FIRE 3
A bit like *Krull*. Monsters and spells in a fantastical world of many wonders. Unfortunately no room for foxy Lysette Anthony or deadly fish/knife combo, the glave...

V-RALLY
It could mean Virtual Rally, but we prefer Very Rally. As it is, rather actually, a rally game. Most obviously so, in fact. Clearly. Yes. Very. (Cease now – Ed)

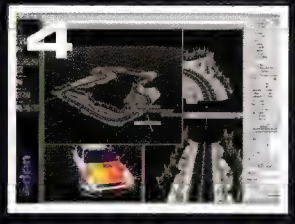
MAX POWER
Boot your hulking metallic chariot to further and faster feats of rubber 'n' soil based speed. Appropriate leaverage to enable a victorious outcome to the pursuit.

CURRENTLY IN **PRODUCTION**

KKND
Make demands of futuristic space soldiers and watch as their shiny galactic suits and pleasant cyber personalities rupture after contact with laser bombs. Then weep....

LE MANS
Utilising the combustion engine located beneath your hood, hoof it after the other motors. Take the line with your bumper, proving to them you are indeed, very much, *le man*.

PLAYER MANAGER
Leaving out the Ciro Cittero suitage, Ratners 'gold' and leather missus, this title instead purveys stats based around the popular bolus punting hobby. Tasteful.



V-RALLY 2
Very rally too. A boot full of new featurettes perhaps. But it's still about teasing some wheels atop wet hillocks and betwixt damp trees to win a cup of solid mixed metals.

They're mad for PlayStation

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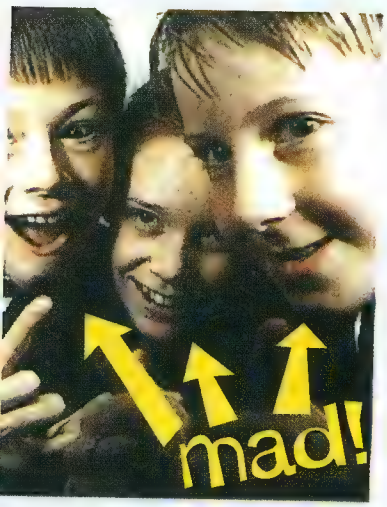

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STUDENT PlayStation NETWORK

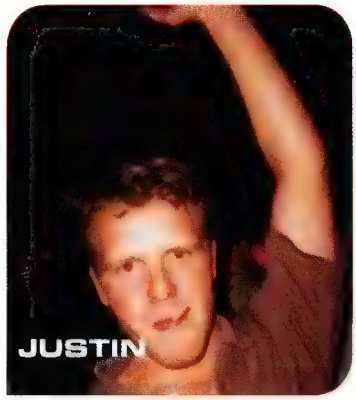
UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

THE *TEKKEN 3* CHALLENGE NIGHT AT KINGS COLLEGE SU, LONDON COINCIDED WITH THE 'CAMP AS CHRISTMAS' THEME NIGHT. RICHARD SILBURN WENT TO SORT OUT THE MEN FROM THE BOYS...

Interesting fact: I have a complicated practical involving a live patient tomorrow
You dig Tekken 3? I play this too much

Fact: I drink far too much but I'm a *Tekken 3* god
Tekken 3? It's a lot better than *Tekken 2*

Fact: I'm gonna be an accountant
Tekken 3? I wanna be the cool dude with the Reeboks



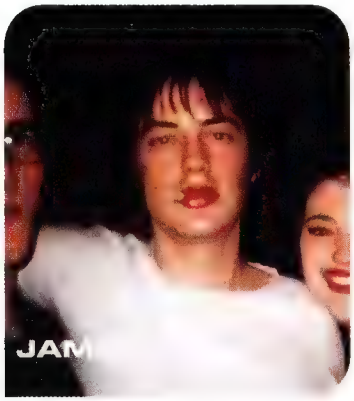
Fact: I windsurf naked
Tekken 3? It's easy for beginners and hard for pros

Fact: These breasts are real
Tekken 3? We prefer the driving games. Don't we, dear?

Fact: We are currently involved in a ménage à trois (Yeah right – Ed)
Tekken 3? We're always up for it

Fact: I moved from Australia 'cos a dingo stole my baby
Tekken 3? I enjoy smacking my mates

Fact: I really am a nurse and I really like wearing women's clothes
Tekken 3? Heinachi is a sexy fella



Fact: I'm the Durham Uni champion and I've come here to kick my brother's butt
Tekken 3? The best by a country mile

Fact: I play rugby and my position is...
Tekken 3? Are you trying to pick me up or something?

Fact: I flash my boobs to get free beer
Tekken 3? Our boyfriends ignore us because of it...

Fact: We've been together since we were kids
Tekken 3? We like the ones in uniform

SHE HAS TWO THINGS LEFT TO CLING TO. ONE IS HER

When the picture was taken, this Honduran girl had just survived the largest natural disaster to hit Central America this century. A mudslide wiped out her home in the Tegucigalpa hills. In a state of shock, she clings to her pet dog - she also clings to the hope that someone, somewhere will help.

The hurricane is over, the relief effort is just beginning.

The disaster may have happened in November, but the need for outside aid is more pressing as time goes by. The hurricane caused immense short-term damage, but the long-term effects could be catastrophic.

The fields are decimated and left infertile. Bridges and roads have been swept aside and access to some regions is extremely difficult. Ironically, though much of the country has been flooded, there is little uncontaminated water to drink. The risk of cholera and typhus is always there, and could reach epidemic proportions.

The people of Central America are resilient and resourceful, but they do need our help to put the basic infrastructure in place so that they can start to re-build their lives.

Don't let her down - please give what you can.

11,000 people are feared dead, many more are missing and millions are homeless. This advertising space itself has been donated by the magazine, so please donate what you can. There are so many people in Central America clinging to the hope that you will.

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Publisher: SCEE / Developer: Namco / Release: April

Ridge Racer Type 4

Gran Turismo has ruled the racing roost for a year, but is it time for Namco to wrestle pole-position from this upstart and put the _Racer_ series back where it belongs? Could be...

It may look sadly dated nowadays, but when the original *Ridge Racer* premiered on the PlayStation four years ago, it was an essential purchase. Not only was the home conversion as near as dammit to arcade perfect, but the game itself was a fantastic, anti-realistic, adrenaline-charged joyride. It was also hugely influential. Namco's baby was one of the first racers to toy with the now essential concept of power sliding, and the title's crowded urban circuits filled with dimly-lit tunnel chases, towering skyscrapers and low-flying helicopters were blatantly stolen by a whole generation of wannabes. The following PlayStation-only sequels – *Ridge Racer Revolution* and *Rage Racer* – only served to build on and expand the legend.

But times have changed. In the many months since *Rage Racer* was launched, a new breed of racing game has appeared on Sony's machine. *TOCA Touring Car Championship*, *Colin McRae Rally* and, most importantly, *Gran Turismo* have introduced an age of ultra-realism, of recognisable real-life cars, of true-world physics, of gritty, dusty, dirty visuals. It's all a far cry from the garish, devil-may-care, drive-by-the-seat-of-your-pants arcade rush of the *Racer* trilogy. And lo, as gamers warmed to this trend for simulation rather than coin-op fun, the Driving Game crown slipped from Namco's once regal bonce.

With this fourth installment, then, the pressure is on. Does Namco follow the herd and go for realism, or does it stay true to its arcade roots and plump for racing thrills over authenticity? The early indications are that the company has gone for the middle ground. Word from the development team is that the driving feel of the game is definitely in the old skool coin-op *Ridge Racer* mould – in other words, the designers have regressed – spurning the accurate physics, telemetry data and g-force dynamics of the sim crowd and presenting the player with cars they can throw around the track like skinny girls at a hoe-down.

That's not to say that complexity has been bound, gagged and bundled into the back seat. There are going to be over 300 fictitious cars (although this number includes vehicle updates and new paint jobs), and the designers are sure to have squeezed plenty of handling styles into the game's central driving engine. Plus, of course, a lack of realism does not mean a lack of challenge. *PSM* has taken a spin round several of the circuits and the experience is typically wild. No, you're not going touch another car and spin hopelessly off the track à la *TOCA*, but you are going to have to master the not-particularly-realistic-but-what-the-hell art of drifting and powersliding which have characterised Namco's racing games so far. It's an intense and exhilarating experience we'd almost forgotten about in the years since *Rage Racer*.

It is perhaps in the game's structure and presentation that Namco has been subtly influenced by *Gran Turismo*. A series of crisp, flashy start-up screens lead you into the game options. The main event is the 'Grand Prix Story.' Here the player ▶

HI-RES HEAVEN

The Japanese release of *R4* came complete with a demo disc showing off forthcoming Namco releases. This disc also contained a version of *Ridge Racer* running at 60 frames per second!

Despite the visual detail, *R4* draws way off into the distance and retains a smooth frame rate.

The *Ridge Racer Type 4* artists have approached the game's design in the same way as a Dutch master would approach painting; with peculiar attention to the way light and shadow affect a scene. Pretentious, *mai oui*, but it looks delicious.

YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MASTER THE NOT-PARTICULARLY-REALISTIC-BUT-WHAT-THE-HELL ART OF DRIFTING AND POWERSLIDING.

▶ selects a racing team (each representing a different difficulty level) and a vehicle type and then takes part in competitions made up of several heats followed by a final – a system highly reminiscent of *Gran Turismo's* full GT mode. Namco, though, shunned the use of real car manufacturers and called its teams after previous teams in games in its own back catalogue. Hence the Pac Racing Club, gets to do battle with the Dig Racing Team and RC MicroMouse Mappy – not quite Aston Martin Vs Nissan.

Once the Grand Prix has been completed, the player then gets to keep all the cars in the team and race them in an 'Extra Trial' mode against an outlandish selection of fictitious vehicles.

As for the circuits themselves, there are eight tracks – although knowing Namco, it'll no doubt eventually be possible to play them back to front, sideways and upside down before the game is through. Much has been made about the artists' use of shadow and light and these elements are indeed quite amazing: a flaming sun sets over the city casting shadows over the Tarmac and projecting reddish hues on to the sides of buildings, street lamps lay strips of garish orange on to the sides of tunnels. When you're racing though all these light sources at 150 mph it can be a somewhat dizzying spectacle.

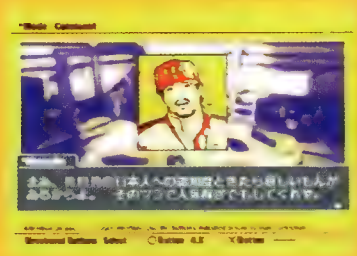
The scenery itself, borrows more heavily from previous *Racer* outings than any subsequent rivals. Concrete underpasses, curvy coastline roads, looming skyscrapers and hovering helicopters will all look familiar to fans of the series. Here, though, everything looks so much more crisp and intricate. Namco has upped the ante everywhere – increasing the polygon count on 3D models and building a range of detailed textures that make the first *Ridge Racer* look like a crude, empty, jerky demo. This is truly looking to be a PlayStation game for the millennium. Not everyone enjoyed the obsessive intricacy and detail of *Gran Turismo*, but many found sub-arcade fare like *Motorhead* lacking in substance. With *R4's* combination of immediate gameplay and real depth, players get the best of both worlds. And, oh those visuals. It's as if Sony's machine is crying, "Look at me, I've still got it!". And it has. Namco knows it. You will know it too.

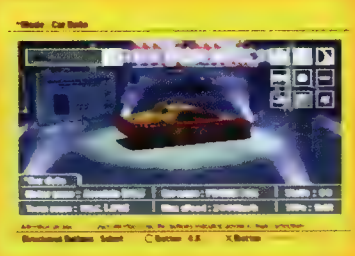
Keith Stuart

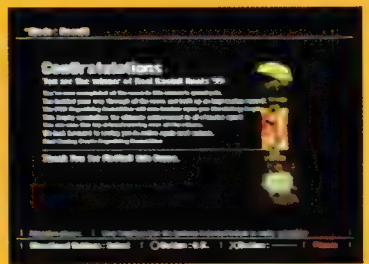
MEET THE JOGCON

Released to coincide with the arrival of *Ridge Racer Type 4* in Japan, this curious-looking pad provides a small, thumb-operated steering wheel positioned

between the two handles. It takes a lot of time to get used to, but some players have found it perfectly accompanies the slam, bam arcade-style gameplay. Many others are not so convinced...







The in-game presentation is rather slick and trendy for a Namco release – there are shades of *Gran Turismo*...

Q&A

To get the lowdown on this superb racer, *PSM* met up with Namco's *R4* team over in Japan.

Motomi Katayama	Chief director
Masatoshi Kobayashi	Programmer
Kazutoki Kono	Art director
Hiroshi Okubo	Sound designer
Koi Yoshimizu	Opening movie designer

When did the project start?
Katayama: We started in May 1997, about six months after finishing *Ridge Racer Revolution*. Numerous designers were involved, but we used around the same amount as for previous games – approximately 33 fixed staff. All the team present today worked on the original *Ridge Racer*. Some of them worked on *Ridge Racer Revolution*.

How much research went into *Ridge Racer Type 4* driving experience?
Katayama: We didn't race on circuits or drive real cars. Basically we all like cars, have driven for years and have a good knowledge of them. However we did drive some particular cars, like the FFR 4WD, to see how it would run on the road. However, we made a racing game, not a simulation. The reason behind this is that when you drive a real car, you can feel things like G-force, speed increasing, tires gripping and so on. At the moment, it's not possible to simulate this feeling, so it had to be a game.

The original *Ridge Racer* pushed PlayStation to its limits, while the sequels were even more technologically impressive. How hard was it to continue this with *R4*?
Kobayashi: When we made *Ridge Racer*, we really believed we used the best of the PlayStation. From a technical point of view, I did not want to make *R4* (laughs). The main focus was to eliminate anything wasteful. We needed to make full use of the number of polygons that can be displayed by the PlayStation.
Kono: The way we displayed buildings, texture size, the number of polygons used... We went back to the beginning, made everything again and got rid of any waste. Despite the fact the game runs on the same hardware, *R4* looks very different.

How difficult was that to achieve?
Katayama: The graphics were usually created first, but it was sometimes difficult to implement them in the game. I had to discuss this with the designers and find a way to 'lighten' their graphics in accordance with the processing power of the hardware.
Kono: For me, what has really changed with *R4* is the use of light and shadow. We used Gouraud-shaded polygons for this. As we explained, there was lots of waste in the original game. We saved some of this processing power and used it for the Gouraud shading. It was very difficult.

Presumably, you made use of the new Performance Analyser (revolutionary analysis software responsible for such breakthrough games as *Gran Turismo*.
Kobayashi: Yes, we used it. The good thing about the Performance Analyser is that you can study other companies games (laughs). *Gran Turismo* was the only one we needed to study (laughs).
Katayama: From a technical point of view, we needed to check what other companies were doing before starting to on our own ideas. For example, there is no other racing game where backgrounds, roads, cars and almost everything else is Gouraud shaded. *R4* is the only fully Gouraud shaded title. Our programmers initially said this was not possible, but we eventually used some environment mapping, headlight effects and transparency.

Was there anything you wanted to do, but couldn't?
Kobayashi: During certain projects, you discover during development that there are things that simply cannot be made. For *R4*, I think we succeeded in making everything we wanted.
Katayama: We even added things as we went along.
Kono: The sky, for example, has different daylight effects depending on the direction you approach the sun. Also showing distant mountain roads

The replay boasts its own graphical thrills, like tail light trails.

Initially, we thought these things would not be possible.

***R4* contains a staggering amount of cars. Did you increase the number of vehicles as you went along?**
Katayama: Some cars may look the same but they offer different performances. With this in mind, we included a total of 321 different types. We did not worry about the amount of cars while making the game. All we wanted was enough cars to implement the game system we wanted. Players must be able to play *R4* as many times as possible. Players who are not so good at the beginning will be able to select more difficult cars as they get better. We wanted players to enjoy *R4* as many times as possible and the amount of cars is important for that.

> "[WITH *R4*] WE WENT BACK TO THE BEGINNING, MADE EVERYTHING AGAIN AND GOT RID OF ANY WASTE."
>
> **Katutoki Kono, Art director**

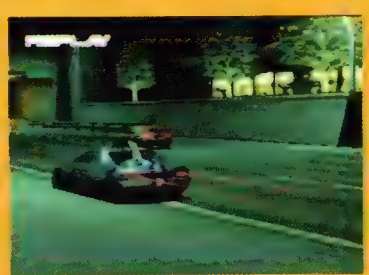
The JogCon has been developed presumably with *Ridge Racer Type 4* in mind. Will some of Namco's future releases also support it?
Katayama: Yes, we have different titles in development that I cannot talk about that will run with the JogCon. For *R4*, we first developed the game before figuring out what kind of controller would fit such a game. But in this case, the JogCon will also work with other kind of titles.

Obviously *R4's* inspiration has come from the Ridge Racer series, but did you look at any other games when you developed *R4*?
Katayama: Regarding the actual game content, we weren't inspired by any other title. We wanted to make a game that was different from all the other racing games.
Kobayashi: From a programming point of view, of course we looked at *Gran Turismo*.
Kono: The same for graphics, maybe. At the beginning of *R4's* development, I looked at different racing games but equally I looked at non-racing games like *Jumping Flash*. For *R4's* sky effects, I looked at the latest *Ace Combat*. There is no better air-combat game for these graphics.

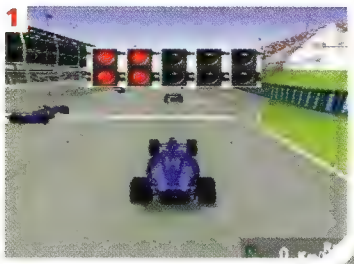
What kind of sound is used in *Ridge Racer Type 4*?
Okubo: We took some sound effects from the *Ridge Racer* series but this time, the game concept is different. For *R4*, the music is more mature, more fashionable. People may recognise some music adapted from other Namco titles. Also *Ridge Racer* only offered ten tracks, *R4* offers a total of 14. There are also some hidden tracks in there. We also used Kimara Lovelace's vocals for *R4's* main theme.

What does the opening sequence look like?
Yoshimizu: It's approximately double the length of previous *Racer* titles – approximately lasting two minutes. This took over six months to make including the planning.

Nicolas Di Costanzo
Many thanks to Tsuyumi Toyoda at Namco



There are eight circuits to race on. When you complete the Grand Prix you gain access to a new 'Extra Trial' mode.



[1] Ping. Ping. Ping. When the lights go off you better stick your Nikes to the floor. [2] Dudes can make up places off the grid. [3] Flick to cockpit view for er... a view from your cockpit.

MONACO GRAND PRIX

Is Ubi Soft's racer a wrinkly Steve Ovett, or a supercool Steve McQueen?

Style: Racing sim

Publisher: Ubi Soft

Developer: In house (China)

Release date: May

Floor it and fire your tin transport around concrete undulations, with your backside mere inches from the track. Such is the hazardous pursuit that is called Grand Prix racing. But is *Monaco Grand Prix* a serious front runner or just another boy racer? Ubi Soft's *MGP* project manager Wu Donghao maintains that the former is true.

Describe *Monaco Grand Prix* in 100 words.
It's a simulation game enabling players to experience the fastest racing in the world. One of the most impressive features is the car behaviour. The Expert mode could be a challenge even to hard-core gamers, while a beginner will be able to enjoy himself in Arcade mode. Up to four players can compete with each other in the game.

Are there any remarkable new gameplay elements in there that set *Monaco Grand Prix* apart from the crowd?
We aim at the best simulation game on console. This game actually belongs in a different category to the arcade-oriented racing games which have dominated the consoles in the past. Players will get more pleasure from the gameplay than the visuals.

What's the best feature of *Monaco Grand Prix*?
It depends on the individual. Everyone will have a different opinion. I will say that the biggest attraction comes from the gameplay. Since the AI cars are as eager as you are to win the race, the best way to overtake them is by handling your car expertly.

PROFILE

Wu Donghao

(1) When you are the 12th male in a field of 12 males, you have got to start questioning your career choice. (2) Driving on sand ain't good. (3 - 4) The scores, not on some doors. (5) Major grief as two cars softly mate on grass. (6) Chicks dig racers, even if they come last.

What is it that drags people back for just one more try?
As I said above, everyone has their own reason. We gave the player as much freedom as possible. For example, in the Single Race mode, the player is able to choose the number of competitors and their starting position – but don't think that placing yourself in the pole position will make your life any easier. You can have a different experience every time you play.

What games have the *Monaco* team worked on before?
Most people in the team are new faces in the industry.

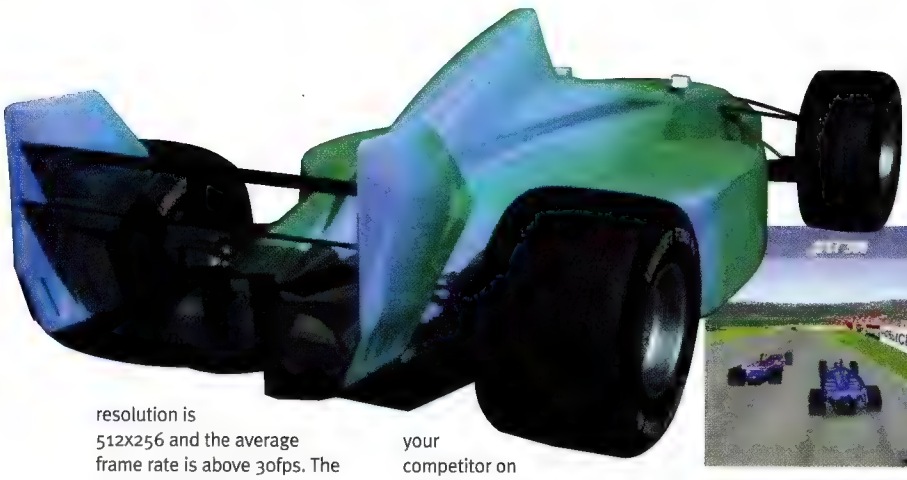
Have you ever been to the Monaco race track for research purposes?
Not yet.

How realistic is the game?
It's realistic enough to let you experience the F1 racing but, obviously, you won't get hurt like in the real thing.

Why should customers choose *Monaco* over any of the other PlayStation driving games?
Because they will spend more time playing before conquering the game. So they will get much more profit from their investment in the game.

Can you detail the depth of the game – the amount of levels, the quality of the graphics and the car handling?
Monaco Grand Prix is playable by one to four players. It has four game modes. Three skill levels are available in the Single Race mode and two skill levels in the Championship mode. We also have a Replay mode and a Ghost mode, which will be attractive to many players. The

(1) This is very much the correct racing line. (2) This is very much a novice pratting about in the undergrowth. Which will you be? (3 - 4) Champagne 'n' sorts await!

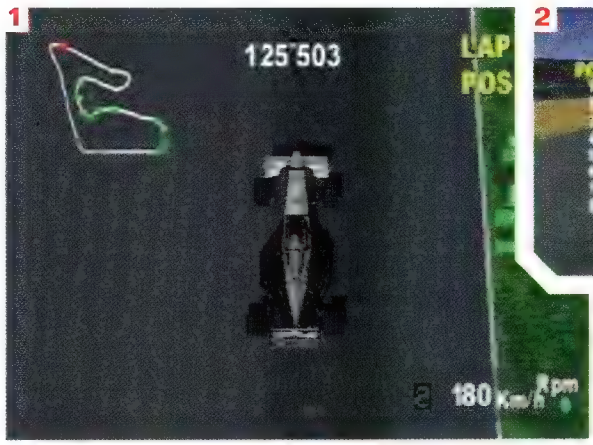


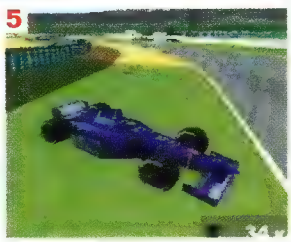
resolution is 512x256 and the average frame rate is above 30fps. The car behaviour is adjustable by changing the parameters on eight different parts.

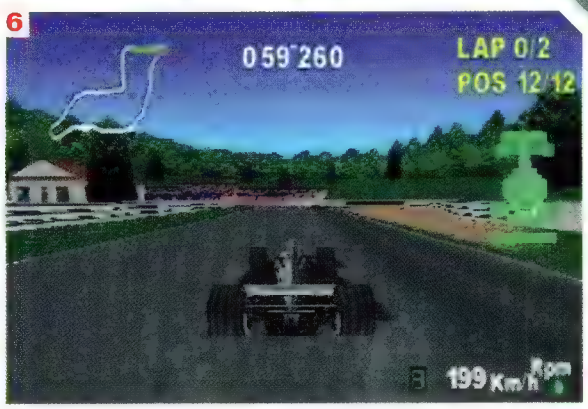
Which game elements/ features are totally new?
We didn't 'invent' lots of things, but you will surely come across some surprises in the game. Have you ever seen your competitor on fire? But, be careful, you may be next.

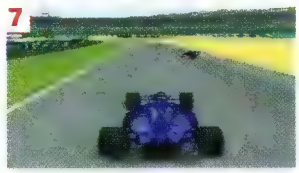
Tell us a secret about the game that you've never told anyone before.
Okay, I know what you want. But the only secret I can tell you now is that there is no cheat code in the game.

(1 - 4) Visually *Monaco* offers varied racing environments without losing the 'real' vibe, currently so desirable in motor racing titles. The funky bright graphics keep it fun.









(1) Viewed from a moth's perspective, the tussle takes on a different dimension. (2) Miserable stats to make you cry into your helmet. (3) Too eager and you'll compromise your metal rear. (4) Moth-Cam. (5) Leaves on the track? (6 - 7) Va-va-voom.

CHRISTIAN SLATER

BAD
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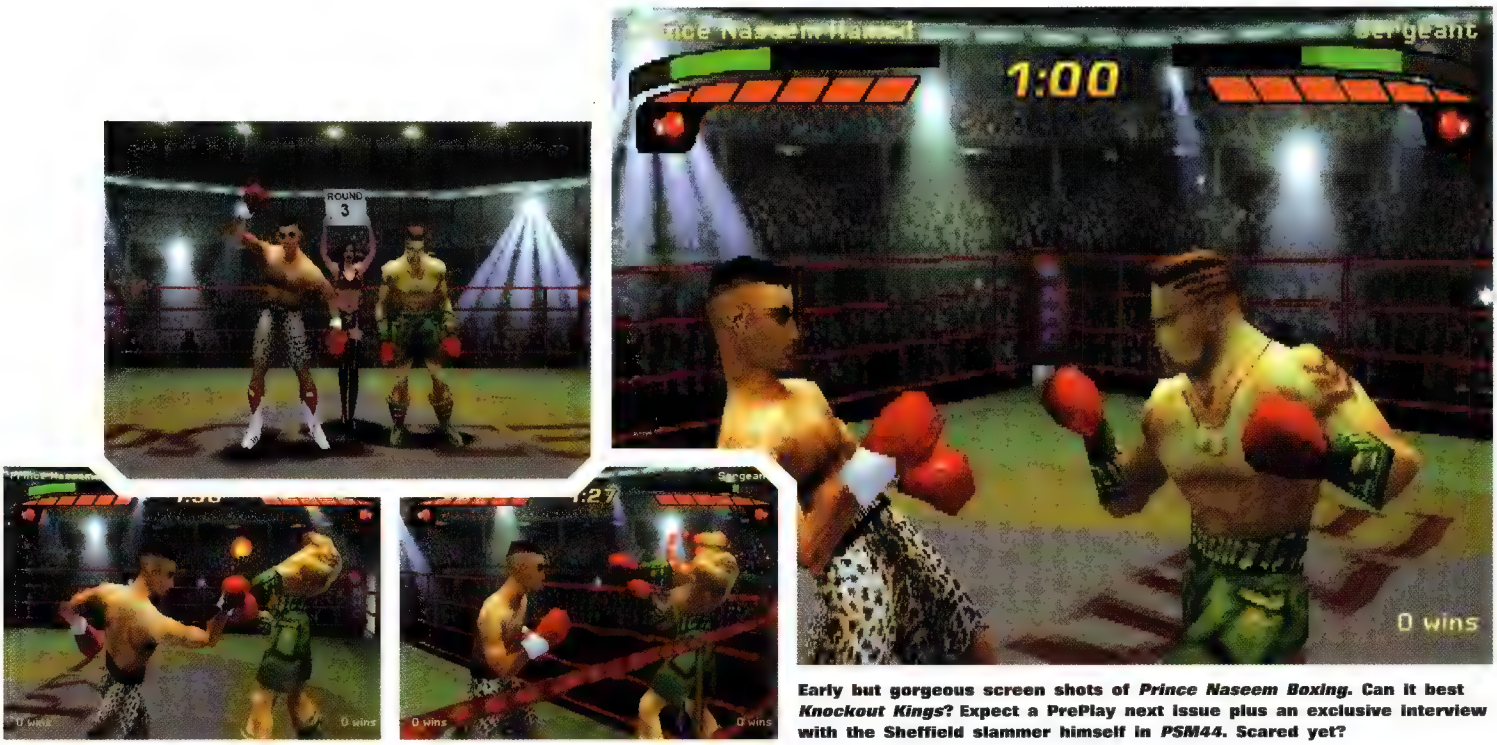
OULD KNOW BETTER



Early but gorgeous screen shots of *Prince Naseem Boxing*. Can it best *Knockout Kings*? Expect a PrePlay next issue plus an exclusive interview with the Sheffield slammer himself in *PSM44*. Scared yet?

PRINCE NASEEM BOXING

Put 'em up against Sheffield's leopard-skin wearing champ

PROFILE

Dave Vout

Style: Boxing sim

Publisher: Codemasters

Developer: In-house

Release date: March

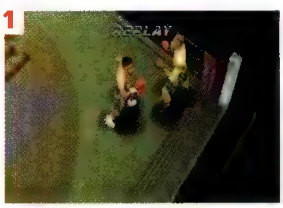
Britain's brightest boxing hope brings his sassy style of smackery to the PlayStation as he lines up alongside 15 fictitious boxers to see off EA's *Knockout Kings* – and without motion capture, no less. Producer Dave Vout is in the red corner...

Describe the game in 100 words.
Prince Naseem Boxing is the first boxing videogame to put speed before simulation. Our two main goals were to create a fast, snappy fighting game and to recreate Naz's boxing style. To this end we opted for not using motion capture in favour of hand-animated kinematic models that use a minimum number of key frames with double-speed interpolation to smooth them out – a long-winded way of saying it's fast and yet smooth!

What do you think sets *Naseem Boxing* apart from the recent boxing games?
All our visuals are very detailed. The boxers use about 800-900 polygons with a skin and skeleton technology and are fully textured, unlike other recent boxing games. The stadiums use about 1000 polygons giving very detailed stadiums, with interactive crowds that stand up when they get excited (don't we all?). We turned the brightness up on everything, used bold colours and maximum luminance – boxing is a very bright and glitzy sport, not dull grey. Basically, we have managed to finally make a boxing game that plays well, looks good and has loads of lasting appeal....

Did Naz have much to do with the development of the game?
Naz has had full approval of the game from day one and visited the studio and spent an afternoon playing the game and talking to people. While visiting us he had us remove a cigar from the trainer's mouth! How we missed that one I will never know. He also showed us a number of moves including his lucky shimmy and extended roundhouse punch, as well as his somersault into the ring – all of which has since gone into the game. He was knocked out by the game and really felt we had captured his style. All in all, the studio was on a massive high after his visit. It really confirmed we had got things right.

What's he like as a bloke? Is he really that hard?
He's great. It's the first time I've seen a celeb really interested in playing a game and ensuring it's good! He had been up since 4am, hadn't eaten but refused to cancel the meeting, and then wouldn't leave. It changed a lot of peoples' opinions of him.... he's a real gent. Oh, and yes, he is quite small! I felt I could take



[1] Next stop, casualty. [2] "Look, I barely touched him..."

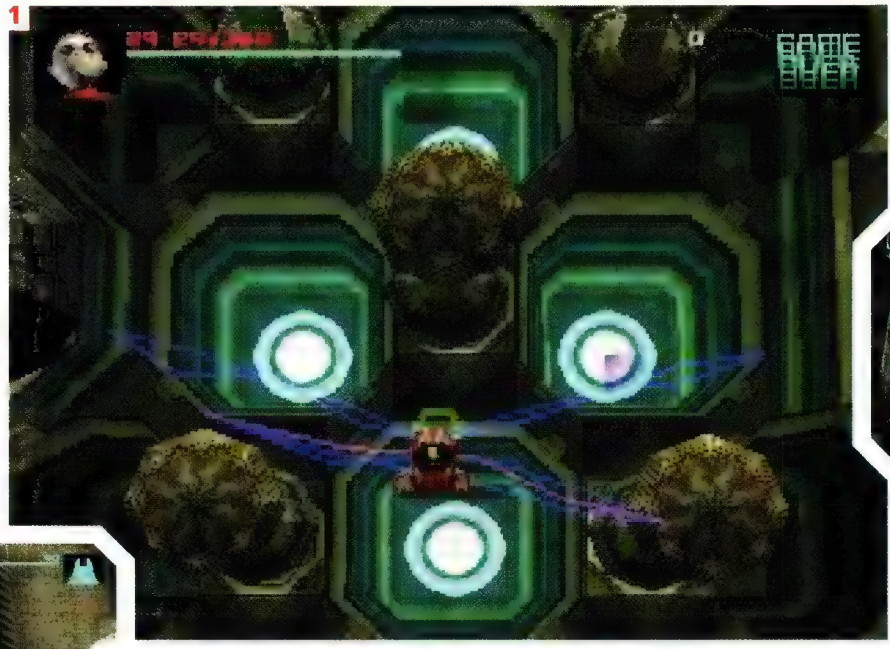
[1] A jab from Valhalla itself as Naz takes on the world's greatest. *PSM* cannot wait to get in the ring... [2] Slick Daddy Ellis? Who hell he? [3] And the winner by the virtue of having nicer shorts is... Well, the geezer on the left.

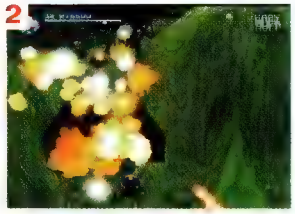
him, but that's just my beer goggles talking!

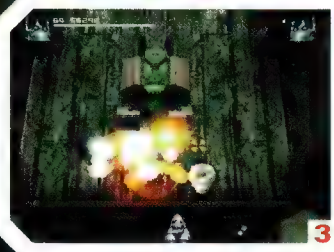
Boxing is not exactly associated with a variety of moves or attacks. How is *Naseem Boxing* kept fresh and interesting?
There are three modes of play. There's a two-player Vs mode, with one-on-one arcade style fights. We also have a Showcase mode which is similar to a cup tournament in football games, and lets up to eight players fight through a number of rounds until they meet in the final to win the belt. We also have a World mode – a Tamagotchi for boxers. The player trains a boxer and is responsible for setting up training and diet regimes, arranging fights and trying to maintain his stats. If successful, the fighter will climb the boxing league, breaking records along the way – youngest champ, most title defences, that sort of thing. The three modes allow for very different styles of play. Vs mode means you can come home from the pub and take on the cat. Showcase is more bring some mates round for a good pasting, As for the World game.... expect to miss three weeks of Sky Sports while engrossed in an absorbing stat-based game.

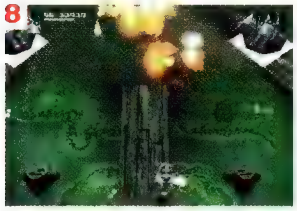
Did the lack of moves in boxing compared to, say, *Tekken* daunt you in any way?
Because it's a boxing game, there are only a few punches available to copy. There are no dragon fireballs or wild kicks, so what we've had to do is think about what it is about boxing that would work well in a videogame. Ultimately, it comes down to a combination of the punches and defence. Defence is a really important part of boxing. If you watch Naz when he is fighting he is constantly dodging. In theory he reckons he could never be hit. He does get hit, but the idea is he would never have to throw a punch until the opponent is tired. We've tried to work this into the game. The X button is usually used to trade punches in boxing games, but we use it to block, as it has to be immediately accessible. It can also be used with the shoulder buttons to pull off body swerves – catching your opponent off-guard and leaving him open to a smack to the head.

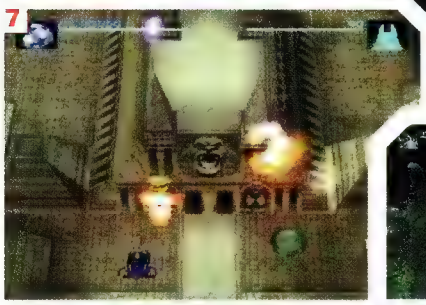
Tell us a secret about the game you've never told anyone before.
Naz asked us to ensure his leopard-skin shorts in the game had the Adidas stripes on the side.

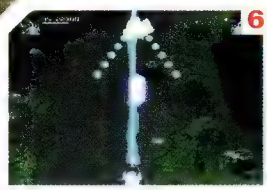


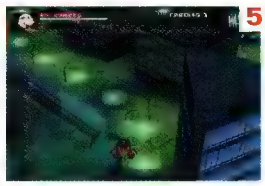


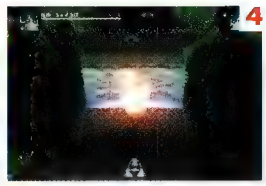












[1] Visually, it's perhaps not going to change the world, but the game mechanics could be its redeeming feature. [2 – 3] Causing craft to fracture and piff into bits provokes memories of torrid nights down the chippy. [4] That would be you and some stuff you've just shot. [5] The third dimension appears to be used in much the same way as *Einhander* – which unfortunately is yet to get a UK release. [6 – 8] Wild changes in scenery will hopefully keep the attention.

PROFILE

Wayne Imlach

RETRO FORCE

"I can walk, I have legs." Again, the 1980's shooter rises from its bathchair.

Style: Shoot 'em up

Publisher: Psygnosis

Developer: In-house

Release date: March

Back by dope demand it's game stylings which hark back to the era of Mike Reid's *Runaround*, Diadora Venice and fighting for one's right to visit a music 'n' booze based social gathering. It's retro. But is it forceful? Psygnosis' Wayne Imlach thinks so.

Describe the game in 100 words.
Retro Force is a true 3D shoot 'em up experience. Fly one of a choice of craft over a number of hostile landscapes, blasting the hordes of airborne aliens that swoop towards you, while picking off countless ground-based targets with your varied bombing systems. Collect power-ups and bonus crystals that are released from vanquished foes to enhance your craft's weapon systems and increase your chances of getting a high score. The action gets more frantic from level to level...

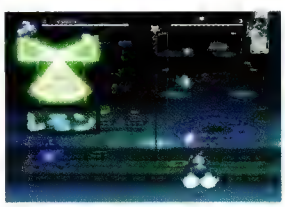
Any remarkable new gameplay elements in there?
The environment is different – it's a true 3D shoot 'em up, with your fighter ship flying over a proper 3D landscape, interacting with 3D enemies and scenery. The gameplay takes advantage of this and as well as your bombing system that allows you to destroy ground-based objects, you have special moves that allow you to fully explore the terrain.

Retro eh? Does that mean the gameplay will be old skool too?
It does have a good few 'classic' elements, so in that respect it should be familiar to retro gamers – but it's presented in a new style suitable for the modern gamesplayer.

Why should punters choose *Retro Force* over any of the competition?
Obviously because it's the best – it's challenging, but not impossible. It's entertaining, but not mindless.

Is there anything in the game that is totally new?
I'd say the true 3D aspect has never been used in a shoot 'em up before. You are really taken into that third dimension.

Tell us a secret about the game that you've never told anyone.
Sorry, if I told you that, I'd have to kill you...



3D certainly, but will it be enough for the 1990's gamer?

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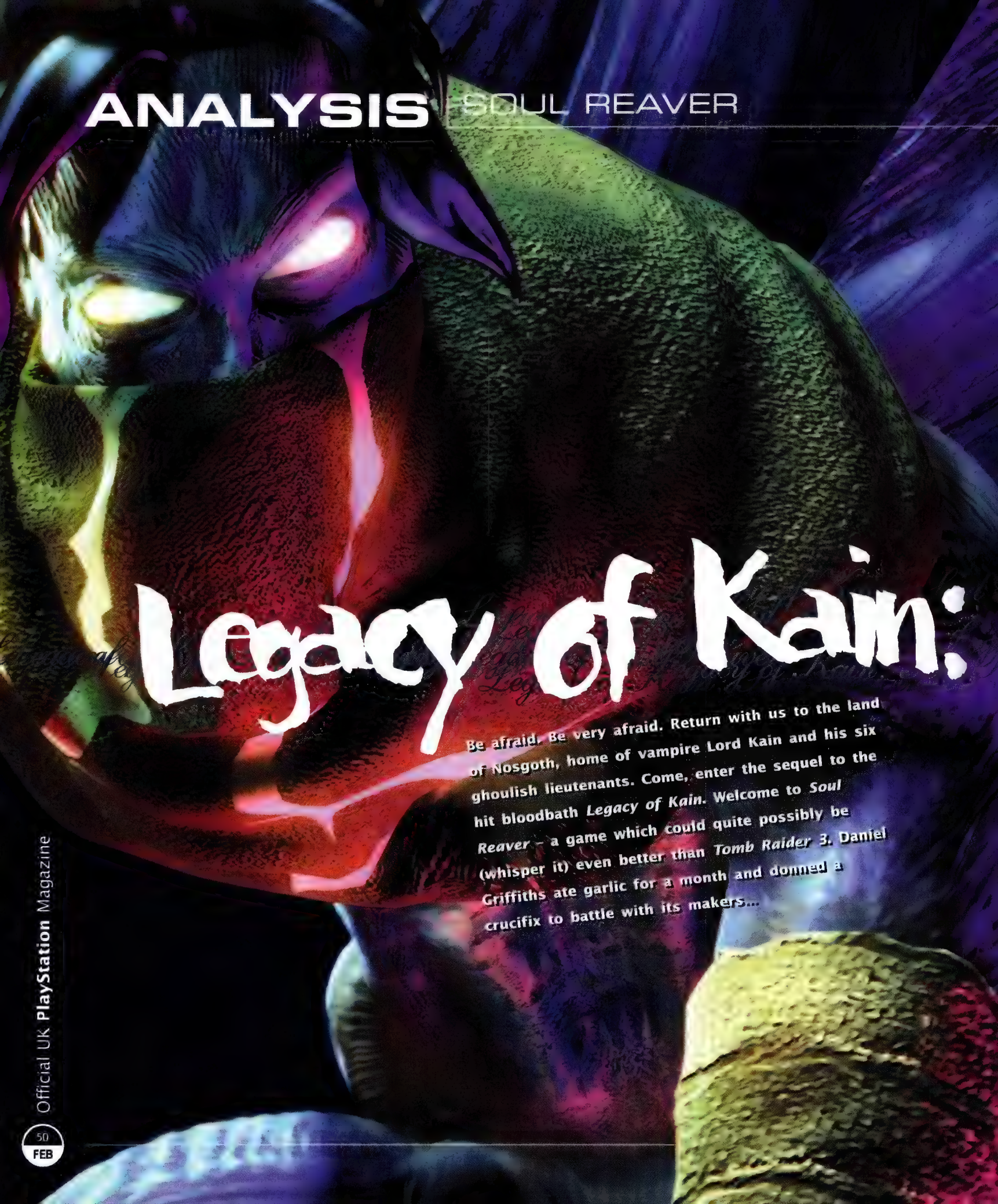


Legacy of Kain:

Be afraid. Be very afraid. Return with us to the land of Nosgoth, home of vampire Lord Kain and his six ghoulish lieutenants. Come, enter the sequel to the hit bloodbath *Legacy of Kain*. Welcome to *Soul Reaver* – a game which could quite possibly be (whisper it) even better than *Tomb Raider* 3. Daniel Griffiths ate garlic for a month and donned a crucifix to battle with its makers...

Soul Reaver

Among the verdant shrubbery of Palo Alto near San Francisco is a building that looks curiously like a church. Inside lurks Crystal Dynamics, god of ground-breaking PlayStation fare and divine inspiration behind Eidos' ever-swelling portfolio. This building has birthed Gex (in his many forms), Akuji (who has no heart), and *Unholy War* (which wasn't that good). Its next work will be its greatest yet. A sequel to the best-selling *Legacy of Kain – Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver*.

The original game was ugly. Blessed with 16-bit looks, this vast, sprawling action RPG struggled to grab your attention. The curious vampiric subject matter helped things along, with the player cast as Kain, an evil dead bloke out for blood-sucking revenge on his killers. After huge worldwide success, a sequel was inevitable. Far less inevitable was Crystal taking the ideas and themes from the original game and transforming the hit RPG into a vast 3D action adventure. Hence the new *Soul Reaver* name – this is so much more than *Legacy of Kain 2*.

What we have is a kind of super *Tomb Raider*, with all the usual third-person perspective camera tricks, lots of exploration, combat, swimming and climbing, plus a host of radical new elements made possible by the spooky other-worldly subject matter. Rosaura Sandoval, producer of the game, takes up the tale. "*Soul Reaver* tells the story of Ralzeil – one of six lieutenants to Kain, the evil main character of the first game, who rules the world at its end. [The vampires] force human slaves to build vast power stations to make smog that blocks out the sun. They've begun to evolve, but Ralzeil takes a step too far. He develops wings, enabling him to fly, before Kain does. Kain banishes Ralzeil to the spectral world and, after countless millennia, Ralzeil is released by The Elder. Things have changed since he was banished. The humans and mutants are quietly co-existing with the vampires and Kain and his lieutenants have evolved beyond all recognition, slipping out of the picture."

And so begins a mammoth trek through 3D space, searching, killing, and generally being very evil. *Soul Reaver* has some incredible secrets up its tattered sleeve.

First of all there's the fact that there are no levels. The world of *Soul Reaver* is one vast landscape, taking in huge valleys and rivers, mountains and plains, and a bizarre assortment of gothic architecture. This is served up via the greatest piece of gameplay trickery *PSM* has yet witnessed. "As you play the game it holds the two adjacent areas in memory, along with the one you are currently playing," Rosaura Sandoval explains. "Enter an area and others are loaded ready for you to step into, so there's only 'Loading' once at the beginning of the game. This enables us to use a lot more textures than any other game too. Each area can have its own set of textures so we don't have to keep re-using them, as in other third-person games." Other third-person games? You mean *Tomb Raider* don't you? "Err... (chuckles) yes," she admits.

The result is that Ralzeil has a seemingly limitless and diverse world

Flip-top box

One of the most eye-popping (and yet really obvious) improvements over the likes of (whisper) *Tomb Raider* is in the field of block moving. Once again you can grab and slide blocks, but the amazing free-flowing character animation and ability to slide, push, pull, flip and stack blocks means that Ralzeil makes Lara look like a glove puppet.

(1 – 2) The balance between open-air exploring and dungeon bashing is just about perfect. (3) An ex-architect designed the lavish buildings.

ahead of him. It's possible to run, climb and swim for miles in any direction without the game repeating scenery or pausing for breath. The total square-footage of land is said to be on a par with *Tomb Raider*, so it's going to take you days to get from one side to the other. Quite a task, and one made all the more curious by the fact that you can't die. What!?

Twice as nice

Soul Reaver dwells on two spiritual planes: the material world and the spectral world – the second being a hellish vision of the first. Gameplay takes place primarily in the material plane, but death (resulting from the eventual sapping of your life meter) will beam you through to the other-worldly spectral variation. Here you must amass sufficient souls (which can be reaped as they escape demised bad guys), to provide the energy to switch back to reality. "Alternatively, you could just play the game in the spectral world as it's essentially a whole game to explore in itself," concedes Ms Sandoval. Here, formerly straight walkways and towers are twisted horribly in the spectral world and openings which were too small, or platforms that *didn't quite reach*, may be passable this time. Best of all, the transition between planes involves the scenery morphing from one guise to the next before your very eyes. Astounding.

The 'dual scenario' trickery crops up time and time again. Should you fail to absorb a dead creature's soul (done with a simple button tap while in its vicinity), its spirit moves to the spectral plane where it appears exactly where you killed it, but in a nastier, more twisted form. Weirdest of all are the various puzzles which feature the plane-shifting at their core. In the spectral plane, time stands still, so rocks dropped from cliffs can be frozen in mid air via a sneaky switch from material to spectral, enabling you to use them as stepping stones.

With all this freedom of movement and potentially baffling plane-shifting action, it's a good job that The Elder (an omnipresent God-figure) is on hand giving you general directions to what the wisest next move would be. Action and plot drives the player into showdowns with Ralzeil's 'brothers' – the other five lieutenants who have become huge gore-spattered nasties. In addition to this fearsome five are three clashes with Kain himself, making eight bosses to take on.

Never ending story

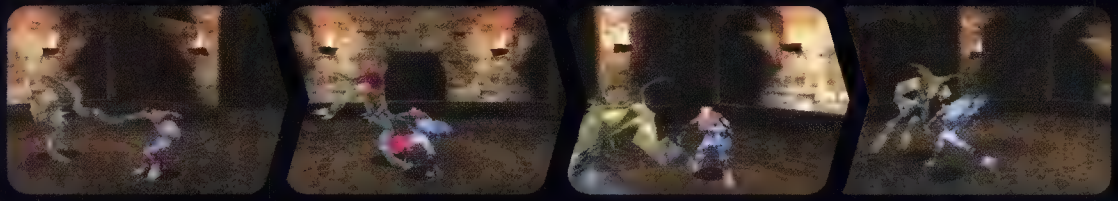
Wandering around the game world is like gradually unwrapping a fabulous present. Rewards are frequent, but often the game only offers you tiny glimmers of the treats yet to come. An area will remain unexplored as its entrance is underwater and impassible to vampires. Or a platform extends invitingly above, but how on earth do you get up there? The answer is via the five skills Ralzeil learns after each of the bosses' demise. "Each boss gives a reward FMA [full-motion animation] using the game engine. This shows Ralzeil being given a new skill as well as furthering the plot and hinting at what he should do next," Rosaura explains. An early boss can glide through walls and locked gates and only careful timing with a vast bloody-mallet-cum-juice-extractor can sap him of energy. Once pulped, Ralzeil earns the walking-through-walls skill. "The other four tricks to learn are wall climbing, swimming, constriction (where running around an object or enemy binds it with a force field), and the ability to warp between the material and spectral planes at will (vital for later time and space-related puzzles)," tempts Rosaura. "Each is won by beating the boss expert at that particular skill and so different and cunning methods must be used on each."

The result is that after each new skill is learnt you remember that weird bit earlier and run back there to try out your new abilities.

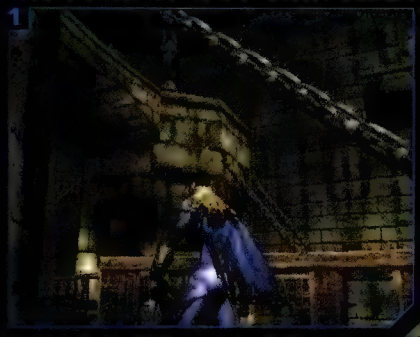
Soul Reaver dwells on two spiritual planes: the material world and the spectral world – gameplay takes place primarily in the material plane, but death will beam you through to the other-worldly spectral variation.

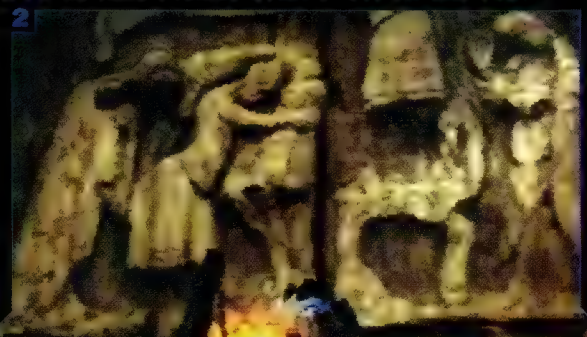
Turn the other cheek

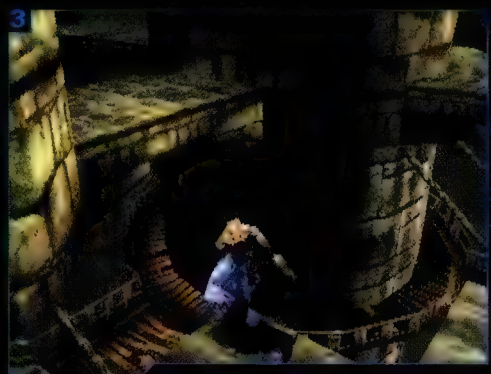
Much of the combat in *Soul Reaver* is close-up, fist-and-foot-based action, so the game is in mortal danger of falling foul of what we call *Fighting Force* syndrome. This is where blows are impossible to aim, thanks to the 3D screen depth. In order to give pleasing *Tekken*-like action, Ralzeil's attention can be locked to a target by holding R1. Once pressed he will always face his nearest foe, enabling you to bob and weave around them with the D-pad, while every thump, kick and sword stab makes contact. Clever.

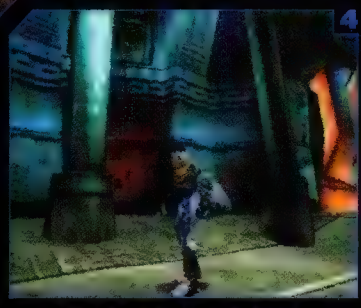


[1] As opposed to the familiar 'box' structure of *Tomb Raider* worlds, *Soul Reaver*'s many dungeons and caverns are frighteningly irregular. [2] Real-time lighting illuminates scenery and character. [3] Each area is a vast labyrinth of spooky chambers. [4] The camera swings around to give the best view.









Suddenly, by being able to swim or climb, a whole new area may become accessible and slowly and steadily the world gives up its secrets to an ever-more-powerful Ralzeil.

Travelling light

Another amazing *Soul Reaver* curio is the absence of any weapons or a goods and chattels inventory. Ralzeil carries nothing with him, relying on handily-placed pointed sticks and crockery to aid him in mortal combat. Stakes may be pulled from the ground, railings ripped apart and urns and rocks hoisted aloft and flung at the assorted zombie-like baddies and scaredy-cat humans. A switch to an 'aiming view' shows us exactly where Ralzeil will fling his new spear, enabling you to take out nasties remotely. "The ultimate weapon in the game is once more the Soul Reaver sword. You get this after your first battle with Kain. It can be used in various ways by powering it up with different elements. Dipping the Soul Reaver into fire, water, ice and so on gives it different abilities which certain bad guys or obstacles are vulnerable to," offers Rosaura.

The combat is pleasingly satisfying even without such weaponry however, with successive 'attack' button presses firing off punches and kicks. "Each of the 30 or so enemies will attack you in different ways. We've tried to make them all unique. The enemy AI is something else too, we have smaller, weaker bad guys who'll run away and lure you into battles with bigger bosses," warns Ms Sandoval. "Also, humans can be either your enemies or worshippers, depending on how you treat them," she explains. "Kill humans and they'll remember and attack you the next time you come across some. Alternatively, treat them well and they'll worship you, perhaps offering themselves as sacrifices like this [she mimes going into a limp-bodied trance], so you can easily fill your health meter."

In addition to the spear and vase chucking, there's more heavyweight artillery available in the form of spells or 'glyphs' which are earned by solving various, usually temple-based, puzzles. These temples are dotted about the landscape and will soon become familiar to you. "There'll be all kinds of visual and aural cues so you know that something special is there and you ought to stick around," hints the cunning producer. The glyphs come in various forms, being special screen-clearing attacks fuelled by your life meter. Pressing Select brings up a glyph selector. They're not essential to finishing the game, but will make later devilish battles a tad easier.

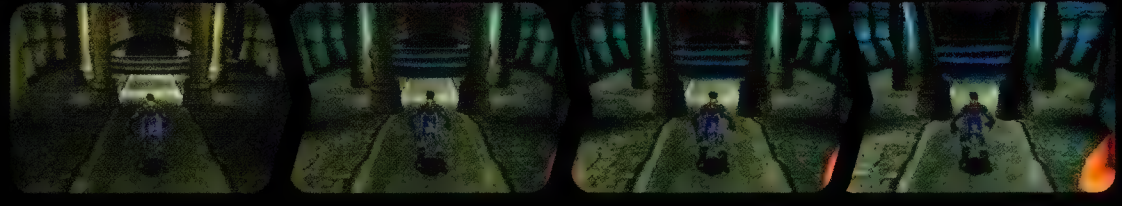
The ultimate weapon in the game is once more the Soul Reaver sword. You get this after your first battle with Kain. It can be used in various ways by powering it up with different elements.

With such a sizable quest ahead of any would-be vampires, saving your game (to allow for the consumption of 'tea' or for toilet visits) is a must. So, save crystals or save anywhere, Ms Sandoval? "The game will enable you to save your position anywhere. I don't like save points. With a game as complex as this we want the player to explore and take risks. You won't dare try certain jumps or do other cool things if you think you're going to die if you fail." Very wise.

PSM suggests that you meet us back here next month when we shall be exclusively reviewing this epic (dishing out more tasty titbits in the process), and you can try out the game yourself via an exclusive playable demo on the disc.

A wide new world

Transferring between material and spectral planes is not only an exciting proposition in itself, but a treat for the eyes too. The game morphs between the two worlds as you watch. "Every vertex of every polygon has an 'alternative position' and every surface has an 'alternative texture'. When we move between planes everything moves to its alternative," explains Rosaura Sandoval, the game's associate producer.



Premier Manager '99

"There's only two *Premier Managers*," chant the crowds. And, would you believe it, they're right.

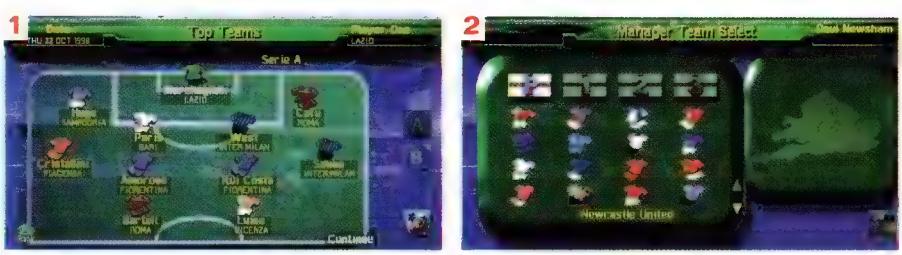
To begin, a warning. If you're not fond of football turn the page. If you're merely 'fond' of football, flicking over this PrePlay is advisable too. You see, to appreciate the vague yet manifold delights of the football management sim, you have to 'love' football with a capital 'L.' If you don't then you should – for your own benefit – leave.

What is it about football management sims? Reduced to their constituent elements, their 'gameplay' involves simple observation and manipulation of statistics. In videogaming terms, they're more akin to spreadsheet software than *FIFA* or *Actua*. But they can be *very* addictive.

PREMIER MANAGER ISN'T A RADICAL OVERHAUL OF ITS PREDECESSOR'S DESIGN BRIEF.

[1] Note this screen. You'll be spending a lot of time here... [2] Player aging is on. So that's Gascoigne knackered, then... [3] The Magpies? Why not. [4] Or Italy, sir? Suits you.

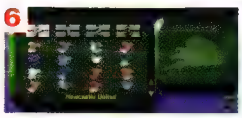
Premier Manager '98 was the first PlayStation management sim to make the metaphorical grade. Admittedly, it lacks the depth of its PC equivalent, but as its save games have to fit on to a tiny 1Mb memory card rather than a gigabyte-packed hard drive, *PSM* forgave its comparative lack of features and awarded a hearty 7/10. It isn't perfect – as the score, naturally, suggests – but it did pave the way for this sequel, *Premier Manager '99*.



[1] Who's performing? This screen tells all. [2] The team screen – the backbone of *PM '99*

Like many videogame sequels of late, *Premier Manager '99* isn't a radical overhaul of its predecessor's design brief. Instead, it builds on its foundations, addressing player criticism and praise while introducing the odd new feature. The most striking alteration is the introduction of the *Actua 3* engine for game highlights. Barry Davies reprises his role as agent commentator during these sequences, and it is remarkable

■ PUBLISHER:	**Gremlin**	■ ORIGIN:	**UK**
■ DEVELOPER:	**In-house**	■ STYLE:	**Footy management sim**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**February**	■ PLAYERS:	**One to four**



[1] Choose life. Choose Wolves. Choose promotion. Gah. As if... [2] This would be the front-end screen, then. [3] The Poison Opponents option [end result pictured] won't be in the final version... [4] Hello, Paul. [5] Super, indeed. [6] Yes.

just how well they work. Both goals and near-misses are featured, heightening the agony and the ecstasy of defeats and victories respectively. For managerial masochists, the opposite applies.

For those who prefer a more continental brand of football, the Italian Serie A joins the requisite collection of English leagues. Gremlin hopes that both championships will run concurrently – and, in all likelihood, they will – with managers able to begin their career in either competition. This opens up a few interesting opportunities. It would be possible, for example, to begin at Barnet, defect to Atalanta, pop back over to Blighty for a brief tenure at West Ham before leading Milan in a championship-winning season. It's a tantalising prospect.

Premier Manager '98 is enjoyed by a considerable number of gamers, but many have passed comment on its, shall we say, idiosyncrasies. From problems with substitutions to an unconvincing aging system – Jurgen Klinsmann still knocking them in for a second division club at 40, for example – Gremlin has duly noted the chants of its demanding fans. It has also taken steps to improve many of the the tactical options, offering a slightly more versatile system.

For fans of midweek matches, the European Superleague presents an opportunity to pit the Premiership or Serie A's finest against fellow EU competitors. It has a lot in common with the real-life Champions League – bar its name, due to licensing restrictions – and introduces the likes of Ajax, Dortmund and Real Madrid. Although these teams don't participate in their own regional leagues, they are fully-staffed, genuine teams. Muster the cash, and it's possible to tempt Rivaldo from Barcelona.

> GREMLIN HAS DULY TAKEN STEPS TO IMPROVE MANY OF THE THE TACTICAL OPTIONS.

There are numerous incidental, though no less pleasing touches too. Order improvements on your team's stadium and you can view the work as it progresses, piece by piece. Similarly, each player has a personal photo and a brief dossier. It's even possible to sell individual advertising holdings. *Premier Manager '99* may not appeal to everyone, but at this stage it seems to be shaping up as the PlayStation's finest football management sim thus far. And, at the end of the day, that's what counts, eh?

James Price

[1] Not Liverpool fans then, Gremlin? [2] The onion bag is perpetually bulging, and here are the culprits.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Uses the improved *Actua 3* engine for the game highlights.
- European Super League? That'll do nicely.
- Manage Milan? We like that, too.
- Selling advertising hordings? Photos of players? More tactics? More players? Why, we're in footy-stat heaven.

POINTS

- Match sequence and highlights appear a bit divorced.
- The match sequences need work.
- Hardly a quick fix game.

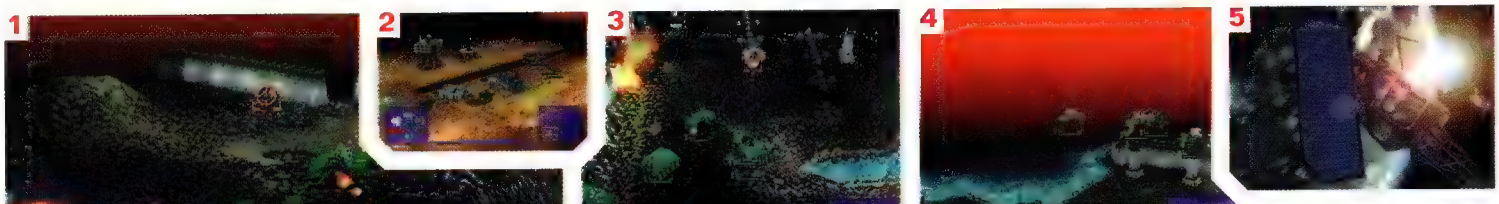
ADVANCE WARNING

Well, here's a treat. Not only has Gremlin acknowledged the requests of *Premier Manager '98* fans, it has also chucked in a load of new features. 'So near and yet so far,' was the general consensus on last year's version. Fingers and Predator boots crossed for *Premier Manager '98*, then...

■ PUBLISHER:	Eidos	■ ORIGIN:	UK
■ DEVELOPER:	Pumpkin Studio	■ STYLE:	Arcade strategy
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ PLAYERS:	One

Warzone 2100

Hallelujah! The missiles are flying over Washington, Beijing and Moscow. Billions are dead and you're tanked-up for revenge...



(1 – 5) A tank-busting hybrid of *Command & Conquer* and the recently-released *Wargames*, *Warzone 2100* offers strategy thrills for the more impatient dictator.

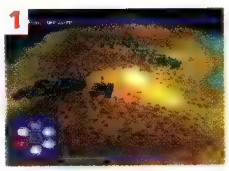
Command & Conquer is a great game but it doesn't exactly pander to arcade tastes. Neither does it have a third dimension with which to bedazzle originality buffs. *Warzone 2100* attempts to combine *C&C's* strategic nous with the 3D battle action of titles like *Return Fire* and *Wargames*.

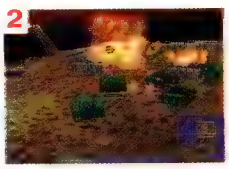
The first thing you'll notice is that there's no cursor arrow. Instead of selecting targets by first pointing and pressing a button on a unit and then pointing at an enemy you actually 'drive' the units themselves. Obviously you can only drive one vehicle at a time but a button press will call on all units of a similar type to follow your lead. Later in the game you can use specialised command vehicles to direct a group's fire at single or multiple targets. But before you scrap you'll need to build up your military might, uncovering resources and building factories, power plants and research facilities to upgrade your vehicles and strengthen your defences.

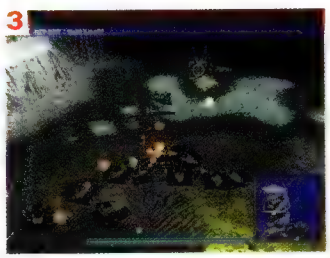
Designing new units is a big part of *Warzone 2100*. By giving each vehicle interchangeable armament, armour and propulsion components you can boost the number of units you can produce to over 2,000. You can design anything from a super-nippy VTOL attack craft to a lumbering giant of a howitzer-toting heavy tank. There are over 400 different technologies to develop, but because your resources are finite you'll have to get your priorities straight if you're to overcome stubborn enemy resistance.

Warzone looks like a well thought-out and well balanced combination of strategy and action. The Campaign mode is especially promising offering three large maps and the opportunity to build up your base over several missions. Oh, and did we mention the link-up mode so you can battle against a mate? Who said armageddon was a bad thing?

Pete Wilton







(1 – 3) Try the playable *Warzone 2100* demo on next month's *PSM* disc.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Combines 3D blasting and thinking.
- Build your own tanks.
- Long lasting Campaign option.

POINTS

- Not visually stunning.
- May be too complex for some.

ADVANCE WARNING

We were pleasantly surprised by this cocktail of shooting and scheming. The research part of the game adds a whole new dimension as you fine-tune your forces to fit the job in hand. The 3D is handled well although the depth of view isn't great and some may judge its re-draw a tad claustrophobic. Still, we've got high hopes for this low-profile Eidos title.

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■ PUBLISHER:	THQ	■ ORIGIN:	United States
■ DEVELOPER:	Inland Productions	■ STYLE:	Wrestle 'em up
■ RELEASE DATE:	February '99	■ PLAYERS:	One to four

WCW/NWO THUNDER

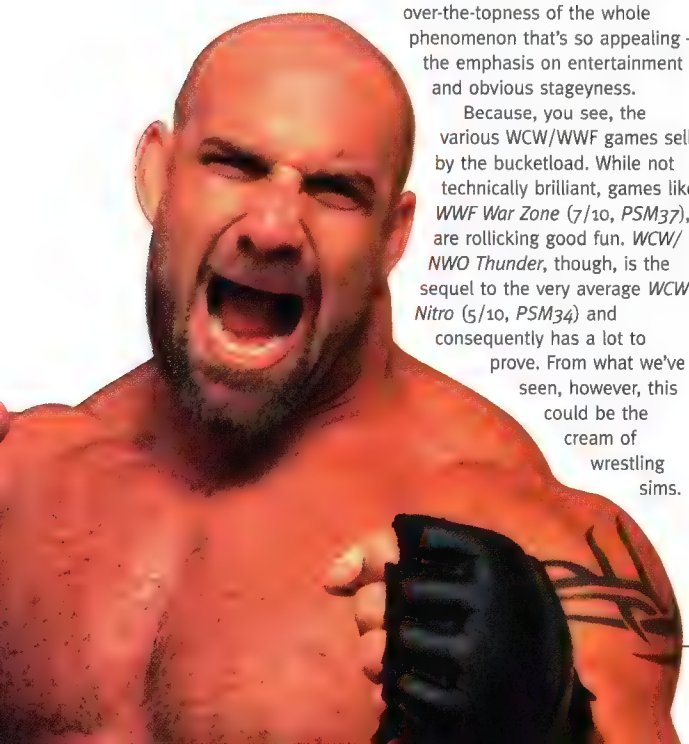
For your delight, THQ presents hairy, sweaty men in leotards. Should you like that sort of thing.

My nan used to love watching wrestling – especially Big Daddy. "His name's Shirley, you know," she'd say.

For what is essentially a very expensive, cartoonily violent pantomime, American wrestling isn't half popular. Of course, everybody has the right to go and shout at fat men in tights, even if they're not consenting adults, but the whole thing seems to provoke far more interest than we simple folk can understand.

Perhaps, though, it is the very over-the-topness of the whole phenomenon that's so appealing – the emphasis on entertainment and obvious stageyness.

Because, you see, the various WCW/WWF games sell by the bucketload. While not technically brilliant, games like *WWF War Zone* (7/10, *PSM37*), are rollicking good fun. *WCW/NWO Thunder*, though, is the sequel to the very average *WCW Nitro* (5/10, *PSM34*) and consequently has a lot to prove. From what we've seen, however, this could be the cream of wrestling sims.



[1] Large men pawing each other. It's faintly disturbing. [2] "Awfully sorry. I seem to have hurt you."

Chief among the ironing-out of its predecessor's faults is the copious tweaking of the game engine. Optimised to run both faster and smoother, the action within the game is now equivalently meatier and far more satisfactory to play. An oil-tanker's worth of new moves has been added too, so you shouldn't be short of anything that enables you to throw an opponent on his head, before jumping on it. Elsewhere, there's a completely updated roster of 60 wrestlers (including beardy fat-head Hulk Hogan, now defected to the evil NWO), running commentary, a smidgen of character design (allocating strength and endurance and, erm, costumes) and wrestler's rants, which should be entertaining.

On the downside, the graphics are still irritatingly shoddy and the wrestlers themselves are a bit too skinny to convince – and, despite the improvements, pulling off moves is still slightly sluggish. But there is time to iron that out.

Anyway, four players, eh? That's not to be sniffed at. We'll tell you all about it soon.

Jes Bickham

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Over 80 real-life wrestlers.
- Polished and improved scrapping.
- Four players!

POINTS

- Graphically shoddy.
- Slightly unresponsive controls.
- It's, er, wrestling....

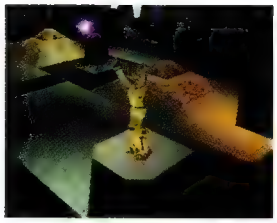
ADVANCE WARNING

Despite the bucketload of extras and all the tweaking that's gone on, *WCW/NWO Thunder* is still a rather slow game to play and the faults of the original game don't yet seem to have been completely rectified. It'll need to be top notch to compete with the more accomplished wrestling staples, such as *War Zone*.

■ PUBLISHER:	SCEE	■ ORIGIN:	US
■ DEVELOPER:	Radical Entertainment	■ STYLE:	Chase 'em up
■ RELEASE DATE:	March	■ PLAYERS:	One to four

BLOODLINES

In the far, distant future we'll all be fighting over little electronic flags, apparently. Welcome to the twisted world of *Bloodlines*.



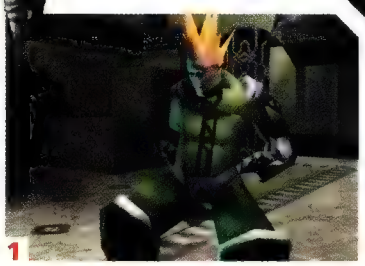
Perform a victory salute as the last flag is claimed.

It's hard to describe *Bloodlines*, but we're contractually obliged to try, so here goes. *Bloodlines* is a game of capture the flag. Each round takes place in an arena with several electronic flags dotted about. To win, each player must turn every flag in the arena bar one to his colour by running over it while he is in control. Being in control involves either being the first person at the beginning of the round to run over a flag, or tackling the player who is in control and therefore reversing the flag. So at any time, there is only one player able to capture flags, all the rest are trying to tackle him/her so that they can be the person who can capture flags.

Sound confusing? Actually it isn't. Sound frantic? Actually it is. But it's frantic in an entertaining way. *Bloodlines* can be played with any number of players from one to four. There's a single-player arcade mode, which operates exactly like a classic beat 'em up such as *Tekken*, with the player progressing through one-on-one rounds until they meet the bosses, unlocking secret characters and arenas along the way. There's also a hyper-frantic multiplayer mode which is where the game really starts to shine. Plug in four joypads via a Multi Tap and you're in for one of the most pleasurable multiplayer experiences the PlayStation has yet to offer.

Controlling the game is a relatively simple matter of joypad movement and button-pushing to control your moves and attacks (there are combos and specials, too). There are lots of characters to choose from and *Bloodlines* has really good, strongly-defined characters that add a lot of fun to the game. There's nothing quite like *Bloodlines* on the PlayStation, which is a good thing, but whether the game packs enough punch and, indeed, whether there are enough players out there with Multi Taps and friends to enjoy the best part of it remains to be seen.

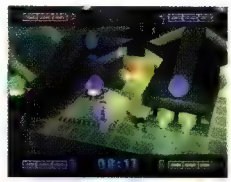
Steve Faragher

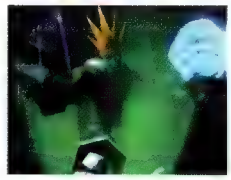


1

2

(1) Alex is distinctly Scottish and owes a 'creative debt' to *Trainspotting*. (2) Leaping points give you a height advantage.





The 'flags' cleverly change colour as you claim them.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Excellent multiplayer action.
- Strong characterisation.
- Secrets to discover.

POINTS

- Slightly pedestrian one-player game.
- May be too unusual to catch on.

ADVANCE WARNING

Bloodlines is an excellent and highly laudable attempt to invent a new genre for the PlayStation, and it's refreshing to see such originality. We just hope it works.

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■ PUBLISHER:	Psygnosis	■ ORIGIN:	UK
■ DEVELOPER:	In-house	■ STYLE:	Strategy
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ PLAYERS:	One

GLOBAL DOMINATION

Wanted: Dominatrix with ambitions to rule the world. Must know your SCUDs from your duds. Experience in strategic weapons deployment an advantage...

(1) Defend your base in Eastern Australia by firing anti-missile missiles. (2) The tactical zoom allows you to pin-point targets within a country. (3) Study your objectives.

As this is just a dodgy FMV intro her make-up was done by second-year Schofield Infants.

Everybody wants to rule the world. It may be a crusty old '80s song but it's not a bad basis for a strategy game like *Global Domination*. This new brain-tickler from Psygnosis is best described as classic videogame *Missile Command* meets classic board game *Risk*. It's the 21st Century: The Millennium Bug has caused the breakdown of civilisation as we know it, what with nobody able to access cashpoints or book cinema seats in advance. It's only a matter of time before World War Three erupts so, as the latest recruit to a shadowy international command agency, your job is to keep a lid on it and ensure that only those who truly deserve it get bombed back to the Stone Age.

After an initial helping of FMV you are shown an astronaut's-eye view of the globe. By rotating it back and forth you can pin-point installations and enemy forces to attack and also launch interceptor missiles to defend your besieged nation's populace. At first you only have offensive and defensive missiles, but soon you are commanding squadrons of fighters and bombers and cruiser groups. That all the action takes place on only one screen is a bit of a let down until you realise that, with so many conflicts kicking off, any more detail would be too confusing.

So far the major gripe is the control system. The game is clearly aimed at mouse-owners as, although it works, aiming quickly with the joypad is awkward. With its emphasis on the big picture, *Global Domination* is also unlikely to win over those of an arcade disposition. On the other hand it's certainly looking big and tough enough to satisfy the most power-hungry strategy buff.

Pete Wilton

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Tactical cleverness.
- Tricky time-sensitive missions.
- Rule the world!

POINTS

- All the good looks of a dirty tea towel.
- Badly-acted FMV bits.
- Could get repetitive.

ADVANCE WARNING

This game fails to tart itself up for a console audience and may pay the price. There's plenty to tax the strategically-minded, but *Global Domination* looks like it isn't using the PlayStation to the max. Without the multiplayer options of the PC version this might not be good enough.

■ PUBLISHER:	SCEE	■ ORIGIN:	US
■ DEVELOPER:	989 Studios	■ STYLE:	Animal running game
■ RELEASE DATE:	April	■ PLAYERS:	One

Running Wild

In Roy *Catchphrase* Walker fashion, SCEE says what it sees. It has running in it. And it's wild...

Running Wild is a race game that forsakes the current trend for fully rendered motors, improbable hover boards or toy vehicles in favour of characters who just run to the finishing line. It sounds simple, it is simple and it works beautifully.

Six human/animal hybrids are the stars of the show, with their respective physiognomy directly affecting their running ability. While this enables the 989 team to trot out the customary 'powerful but slow' racing cliches, *Running Wild*'s garrulous presentation blinds you so much that you *almost* forgive them – it even manages to hide the game's blatantly unoriginal content.

There are no frills or fancy intros, and 989 has kept everything to the bare minimum, preferring to showcase the actual racing. The three-lap runs take place in five main venues, with a further two awaiting those who have mastered the Easy and Medium settings.

The race begins with a roving camera tailing the player's manimal runner as they barge opponents out of the way, and you use racing stalwarts such as speed-up pads and turbo icons to steal the advantage. Control is similarly spartan with the occasional tap of the jump button used to avoid the cliched hazards of lava, slippery ice and the like.

Running Wild basically *is* a stripped down *Crash Bandicoot*, but its simplicity makes for an immediate game. 989 has worked to keep everything streamlined, and it works. During the course of the game, players can take short cuts, perform cartilage-cracking leaps and slide on their bellies. Ease of play is, as ever, a double-edged sword and although the three difficulty levels are tough hombres, a mere seven stages ruins long-term appeal. That said, playing *Running Wild* made *PSM* grip the joypad so tightly in our quest for record times, we experienced acute wrist cramp unknown since our early teens. A sure reminder that there's a lot to be said for short-term gratification...

Steve Merrett

[1] Oooh, you could slip and fall... [2] That lineup in full.

[1] Ice ice baby... [2] Ready, set... *RUN VERY QUICKLY!* [3] The svelte pandawoman. Minces a bit, this one.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Fast and slick gameplay.
- The three difficulty levels offer a real challenge.
- Numerous short cuts and secondary routes.

POINTS

- Not enough levels. Kids only?

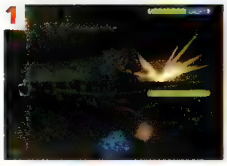
ADVANCE WARNING

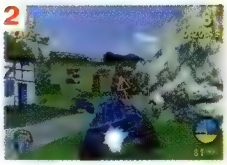
Running Wild **is the perfect game to silence the rose-coloured specs brigade – a playable racer with its roots in the old school of simplistic titles. It is fun to play, surprisingly taxing and everything works together to create a slick product. We have our doubts over its lasting appeal, but while it lasts *Running Wild* is a chuckle from start to finish. Ready, set...**

■ PUBLISHER:	Grolier	■ ORIGIN:	UK
■ DEVELOPER:	Glass Ghost	■ STYLE:	Racing 'n' blasting
■ RELEASE DATE:	March	■ PLAYERS:	One to two

TANK RACER

Develop Rommelesque tanktics in this accelerating armoured altercation.





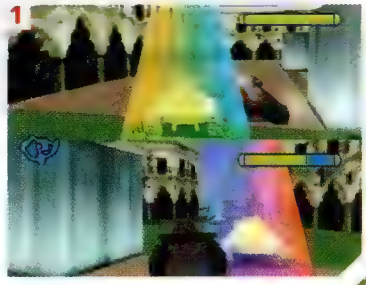
(1) Take your kettle car for a dip. (2) A speed boost. Smart.

One would, of course, be a mite foolish to wear salad. Equally ill judged, perhaps, is bathing in cardboard. Chewing carpet. Fighting with baguettes. Blowing your nose on a telephone. Racing tanks. And there lies the rub. For while most of these absurd pursuits remain the preserve of fruity minds, the latter is now a game by Grolier.

So to business. Yes, it's a racing game. Yes, you're in tanks. And that's, kind of, it. As you might predict fanciful, but beneficial, objects are plopped about the place waiting for your attention. There is a choice of tanks – with manifold diversities, including speed, grip and acceleration. And the title includes eight track themes, incorporating trawling through villages, theme parks and moon domes.

And how does this festoon of armaments rack up on the visual frontier? Not that well really. The turreted traversers are boxy and undetailed, the route down the track builds itself in lumpen blocks right before your eyes and the landscape appears uncrafted and cubular – so why is it so damn playable?

It's a tough one all right, but it is surely down to the mechanics of play. The robust, sluggish

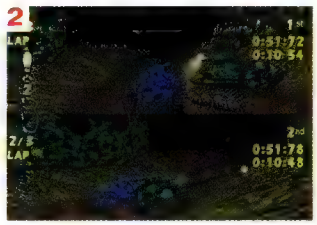


(1) Alien transporting coloured beams. (2) Well done big track.

transports drift round the track, flattening cars, foliage and – what appear to be – cardboard cows with ease. The handling is deeply pleasurable. On top of this you can rotate your roof-mounted cannon independently of your chassis. This is vital, as during a heated dalliance for position, one can casually spin the turret to face the competition and let fly with heated blobs of metal. Interestingly, this does exactly no damage whatsoever. But what it does accomplish is hammering the offending tank off course, enabling you to sail past. Indeed none of the power-ups or scenery will so much as dent you, but the opportunities for inconvenience are legion.

With two-player arena battles and races and single-player rankings to work through, not to mention hidden games, *Tank Racer* is shaping up into a quirky, but potentially entertaining title.

Stephen Pierce



(1) Ping dudes with your mounted cannons. (2) Two-player japes.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Rotating turrets offer violent laughs.
- The handling is basic, but pleasant.
- Single-player fun sits just the right side of tricky.

POINTS

- Visually, it's uninspiring and flaccid, like an old sausage.

ADVANCE WARNING

It's the kind of title which needs championing and could well go on to be a minor hit. The limp eye candy won't do it any favours, but the title's inherent simpleness ensnares you by the thumbs and demands attention. Currently it's a quirky, playable game which could really do with a make-over before release.

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NHL Breakaway 98
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Nuclear Strike
One
Pandemonium 1 & 2
Panzer Bandits
Parappa the Rapper
Pitfall
Pitfall 3D
Porsche Challenge
Poy Poy
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Star Gladiators
Steel Harbinger
Steel Reign
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■ PUBLISHER:	Psygnosis	■ ORIGIN:	UK
■ DEVELOPER:	Magenta	■ STYLE:	Future blaster
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ PLAYERS:	One to two

Contenders, ready? Gladiators, ready? Cast of *Prisoner Cell Block H*, ready? Meet a game that adds new meaning to the term 'jail break'...

The Scrubs: Circa 2880. Political prisoner R Barker is forced to enter a life-or-death contest by The State after attacking warden McKay. His struggle for freedom, fags and an end to 'slopping out' will be televised throughout the civilised galaxy. Pausing only to mutter "Alright Godber, look after the lads for me," he squeezes into his attack craft and prepares to face almost certain death. Sorry, we had to give a UK slant to this story of maximum security prisoner turned freedom fighting pilot, otherwise it would've only ended up a TV movie starring Sly Stallone.

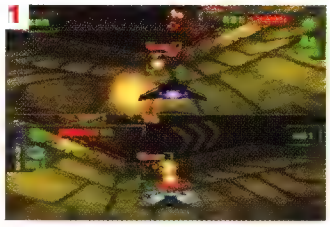
In a world of videogaming mongrels *Eliminator* is yet another cross-breed. It's sort of *Twisted Metal* meets *Dodgem Arena*. The idea of the game is simple to the point of cliché: you pilot a heavily armed craft and must fight your way to the end of each arena within a set time limit. There are robots, mines and gun emplacements. Basically, if it moves (or even if it doesn't) it's dead set to pass you a death sentence.

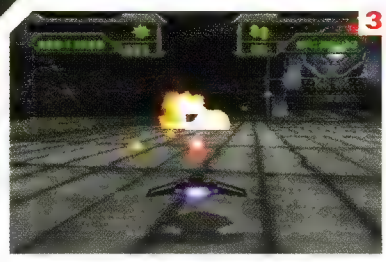
Like *Dodgem Arena* there's nothing in *Eliminator* that we haven't seen before, it's the combination of elements that surprises. Speed + guns + mazes + time limit = a game where economy of movement is almost as important as pin-point blasting. In this early version targeting is a problem, with a down-push of the D-Pad raising sights, so you're often blasting at the knackers of a robot when you should be shooting its head off. While speed is normally a good thing, here it seems more like a handicap. There's only so much dodging you can do when the exit from each area is being blocked until you destroy the sentries patrolling within.

It's early days for *Eliminator* but if it's to beat genre-busters like *G-Police* then it's obvious that some heavy tinkering is needed. Different? Yes. But can it tempt us away from all the racers, adventures and beat 'em ups? The jury is out.

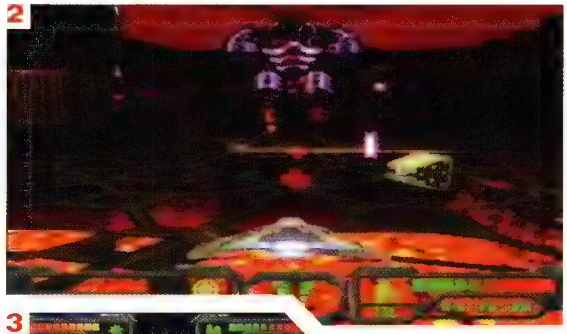
Pete Wilton

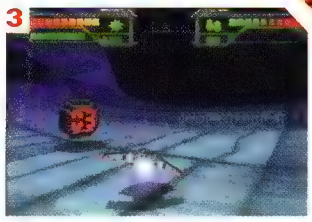
[1] Look out for for missiles and other top power-ups. [2] One ugly robot. [3] Dodge these incoming rounds.





[1] Blast each other in two-player mode. [2] This boss must die. [3] Some extra time.





PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Super-fast sleds.
- Action against the clock.
- Two-player head-to-head.

POINTS

- Targeting needs re-thinking.
- Arenas are too small.
- Falls awkwardly between two genres.

ADVANCE WARNING

Without being judge, jury and executioner, even at this stage, it's clear that *Eliminator* needs a lot of polishing and fine-tuning if it's to be deemed an AAA title. Future sports sims are a difficult game type to get right at the best of times and the addition of blasting to the equation only really adds an extra element of uncertainty. It's fast and furious but we're worried *Eliminator* won't have the gameplay to hook the more hardened gamers.

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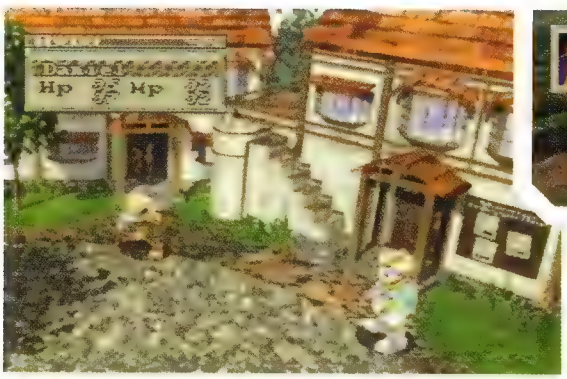
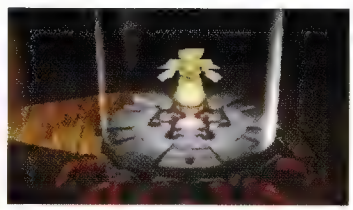
■ PUBLISHER:	Sunsoft	■ ORIGIN:	Japan
■ DEVELOPER:	NK System	■ STYLE:	RPG
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ PLAYERS:	One to two

MONSTER SEED

No, it isn't a dodgy anime-style Japanese porno-game, it's the latest RPG from Sunsoft. That first one sounds interesting though...





***Monster Seed* certainly looks very pretty, with loads of lovingly detailed polygonal characters and well-drawn backgrounds.**

No RPG is complete without a veritable horde of different types of monster for the plucky hero to send back to whichever hell they may have sprung from. They may be large or small, vicious and nasty or cute and laughable, but they're always lurking around the next corner, waiting to jump out and start a fight.

Monster Seed, the upcoming RPG from Sunsoft, is no exception, boasting an almost limitless range of fanged, clawed, spiked and ooze-dripping nasties of every possible shape and size. What makes it slightly unusual is that you get to fight fire with fire – when your enemies throw dozens of the critters in your direction, you can summon your own monstrosities and throw them right back.

In the town of Rempearl recent excavations have uncovered dozens of monster seeds – ancient eggs from the world's Fourth Age. The Rulers of Rempearl can hatch these eggs, giving rise to monsters that they can then summon at any time. By using combinations of different Seeds, chemicals and temperatures, these Rulers can affect the abilities of the monsters they create, tailoring them to specific needs. Unfortunately, some Rulers use their powers for personal gain, terrorising others and generally being nasty and spiteful to all and sundry. Which, rather predictably, is where you come into the picture.

As Daniel you must learn how to breed monsters and then pit them against those of the nasty Rulers in spectacular combats. The flexible hatching system will allow you to create literally dozens of different types of monster, each with unique powers and abilities. The game will combine exploration, character interaction and so on with a fair degree of strategy and tactics, as you decide which monster to use and when.

Monster Seed also looks very nice, with a host of fully texture-mapped polygonal characters and monsters, which really come into their own in the intuitive turn-based combats. The finished game is unlikely to appeal to everyone, but dedicated RPG fans should look out for more details soon.

Andy Butcher

PSM OPINION

POINTS

- Well animated polygonal characters look great.
- Ability to breed custom monsters adds depth and variety.
- Intuitive turn-based combat system.

POINTS

- Poor translation makes some conversations hard to follow.
- Throws you straight into the action, making it initially confusing to play.
- The plot takes some time to get started.

ADVANCE WARNING

***Monster Seed* seems to be an interesting combination of ideas from several different RPGs and has some neat twists of its own. In addition, the graphics are very pretty and the monster breeding is intriguing. However, the poor translation from Japanese really lets things down: the story is very unclear. But it does look set to be an interesting and quirky little game, if it's no *Final Fantasy* beater.**

In your adventures you meet dozens of characters and visit locations from shops to houses to dungeons. Yay!

■ PUBLISHER:	**Software 2000**	■ ORIGIN:	**Germany**
■ DEVELOPER:	**In-house**	■ STYLE:	**Puzzle**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**February '99**	■ PLAYERS:	**One to two**

Swing

Red, colour, red, colour... [snore]. Can a puzzler that's played at the pace of snooker take off? Well, if Steve Davis is called a sportsman anything is possible.

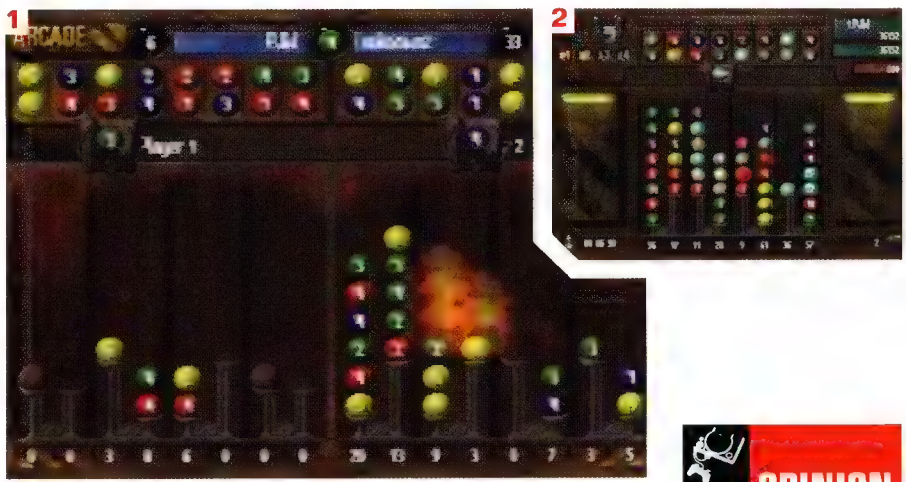
Puzzle games featuring multi-coloured blocks have been around since the very dawn of consoledom. The idea behind them is that blocks tumble from the top of the screen and must be manipulated into lines of the same colour to make them disappear. The eventual goal of all such games is to exhaust the supply of blocks and clear the screen. *Swing* adds two new elements to the equation. Firstly, the bottom of the screen is lined with see-saws that look like grocer's scales and secondly each ball has a different weight, indicated by a number on the side.

If positioned horizontally the balls behave much as you'd expect, vanishing once they're aligned in threes. Vertically it's a different story, instead of vanishing, columns of balls will compact to form a single, super-heavy ball. This is where the see-saws come into play as a heavier ball on one end will lift the ball on the other or even flip it into a new column. This makes actually lining them up more difficult as see-saws tilt one way then the other as balls are added – it's a bit like juggling in an abacus.

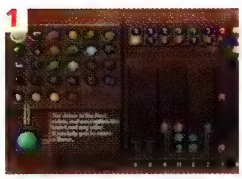
Matters are both helped and hindered by a selection of 28 special spheres that produce a variety of effects, from munching all of a particular column to clearing the whole screen. It has to be said that whether you're playing in Sudden Death or Mission mode *Swing* is very odd. Unlike most similar puzzle games speed is certainly not of the essence as you calmly ponder dropping a red ball over here or over there, mentally weighing up numbers and leisurely perusing the top of the screen to see what's coming up next. Grey matter-wise it's more akin to doing a crossword than the frenetic shooting and twirling of *Bust-A-Move 3* or *Tetris Plus*. Even on two-player the pace is measured as you try to catapult balls from your screen to land as troublesome boulders in your opponent's half.

Will it catch on? This version isn't as visually appealing as some of its rivals but then it's the bulging nuggets of gameplay that everyone's after and we'll need the extended workings of a PlayTest to mine that information.

Pete Wilton



[1] In the two-player mode a ball thrown over the divide will land as a boulder in your opponent's half. [2] Can it top *Bust-A-Move*?



[1] These balls have different effects. [2] Three stars clears the screen. [3] Super-heavy balls.

PSM OPINION

POINTS

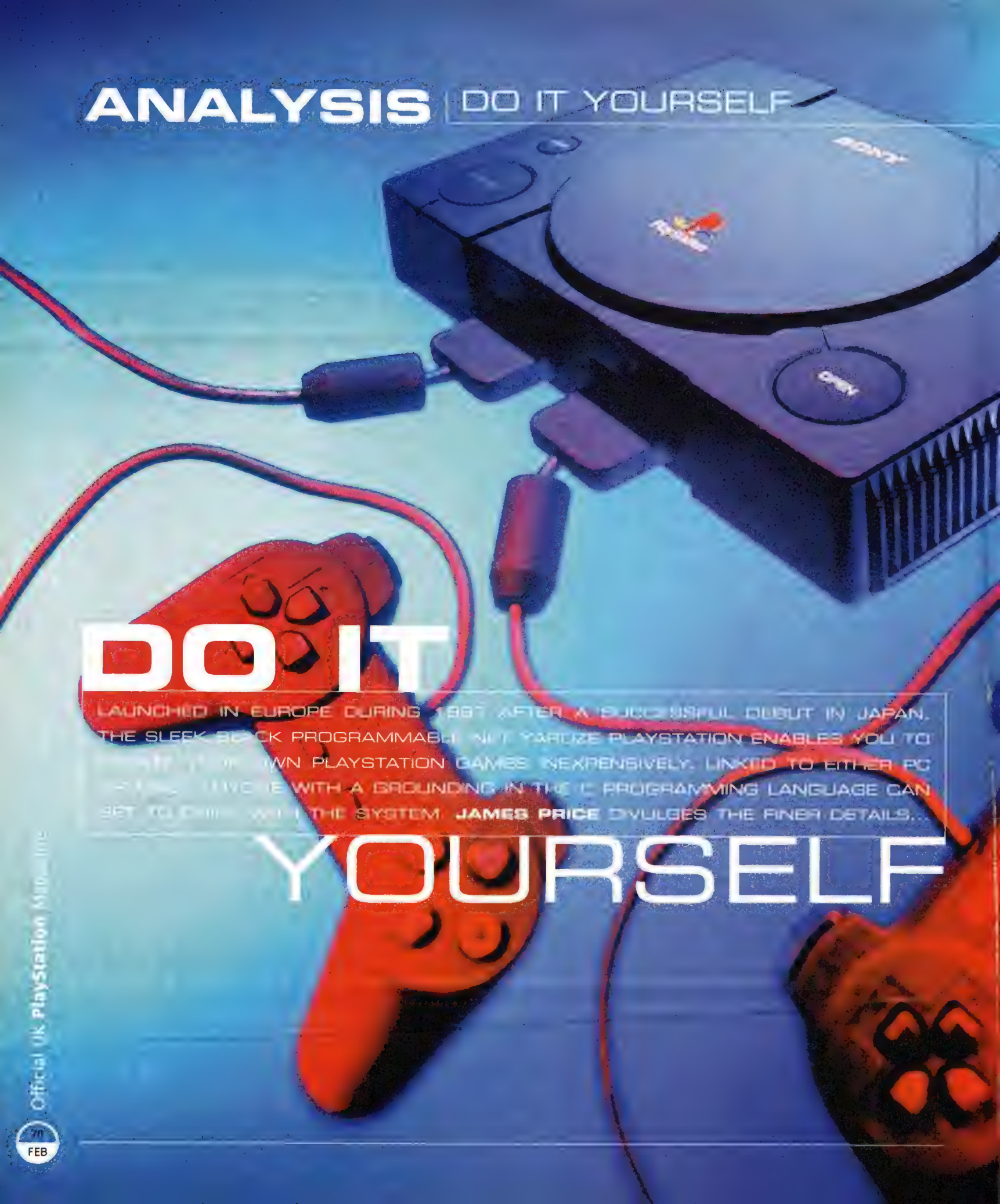
- Lots of original features.
- Two-player head-to-head.
- Strategic depth a-plenty.

POINTS

- The measured pace might leave your thumbs cold.
- Not that pleasing on the eye.
- Might be too odd for some.

ADVANCE WARNING

This has been knocking around in PC land for a while and seems to have found a niche audience there. But whether its deliberate gameplay will appeal to arcade-weaned PlayStationites like us is another matter. Puzzle games are often sleeper hits but no-one in the *PSM* offices is hooked on this... well, not yet.



DO IT YOURSELF

LAUNCHED IN EUROPE DURING 1995 AFTER A SUCCESSFUL DEBUT IN JAPAN, THE SLEEK BLOCK PROGRAMMABLE NET YAROZE PLAYSTATION ENABLES YOU TO [illegible] WN PLAYSTATION GAMES INEXPENSIVELY. LINKED TO EITHER PC [illegible] WITH A GROUNDING IN THE C PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE CAN GET TO [illegible] WITH THE SYSTEM. **JAMES PRICE** DIVULGES THE FINER DETAILS...

Library Release
Solitaire Development
PlayStation
ACCESS CARD
SONY

POWER

CONTENTS

- BLACK MULTI-FORMAT NET YAROZE PLAYSTATION
- TWO CONTROLLERS
- ONE A/V TV LEAD
- ONE COMMUNICATIONS CABLE
- PLAYSTATION DEVELOPMENT TOOLS CD
- DEVELOPMENT LIBRARIES AND UTILITIES
- STANDARD C PROGRAMMING LIBRARIES
- PLAYSTATION MATHS LIBRARIES
- HIGH-LEVEL USER-FRIENDLY 3D RENDERING LIBRARIES
- PLAYSTATION CONTROLLER INTERFACE LIBRARIES
- SPECIAL NET YAROZE SOUND LIBRARIES
- GRAPHICAL FILE FORMAT CONVERSION UTILITIES
- 3D OBJECT CREATION/CONVERSION UTILITIES
- PROGRAMMING TOOLS
- R3000 C COMPILER
- LINKER
- DEBUGGER
- PLAYSTATION BOOT CD
- ACCESS CARD (security dongle)
- SERIAL CABLE (connects PC or Mac to Net PlayStation)
- DOCUMENTATION (three manuals)
- START-UP GUIDE
- USER GUIDE
- LIBRARY REFERENCE
- ACCESS TO NET YAROZE MEMBERS WEB SITE

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

"I could do better," has long been the rallying cry of the disgruntled gamer. Net Yaroze has a straightforward reply: "Why the hell don't you?"

For the new, reduced price of £229, Net Yaroze members receive the items listed in the boxout on the right. In addition, you'll need a minimum-spec PC – 486DX2 66MHz with one free serial port and 4Mb RAM (we advise a more powerful machine) – or an Apple Mac, but a decent PowerPC is a must.

Other expenses are optional. The Net Yaroze can display PAL and NTSC signals, so you might consider investing in a new TV. If you'd like a better quality display, spurn the AV cables in favour of the superior SCART or S-Video equivalents. Finally, Sony offers a third-party development system, called *CodeWarrior*, for £90. If you're serious about creating Yaroze games, you'd be well advised to consider it.

ASK THE EXPERT

We gave a Net Yaroze pack to Ade Miller, a programmer with 20 years' experience, and told him to get on with it. Here's what he discovered.

Wednesday: My new toy finally arrives. It's matt black and sucks in light – a bit like the Death Star but with more gameplay. Hooking it up is a step-by-step affair and a test program is provided so it's easy to check that the whole system works before trying to write any games. The *CodeWarrior* development system appears like a Mac application, but seems to do the business. It also includes a program for downloading completed programs on to the Yaroze.

Friday: The test program, *CHECK*, displays bouncing balls on the screen and enables you to vary the number of balls using the controller. Not very enticing, but opening up the *CodeWarrior* project reveals it can be done in only a few pages of code.

Saturday: Time to write some real code. Tear *CHECK* apart and turn it into a real game, rather than a demo. The *CHECK* code is a bit messy and needs a spot of rewriting so I can reuse bits of it. Turns out that although *CodeWarrior* will compile C++, a more powerful version of the C language, the Yaroze doesn't run it. It's a shame, but it's not the end of the world. Time to dust off those old C manuals.

Code has to be downloaded on to the Yaroze before it can be tested. This really makes you think about what you're doing before going to the trouble of downloading it. Obviously downloading a whole game using the serial connection to the Yaroze would take quite a while, luckily Sony thought of this and a lot of the Yaroze code is stored on a special CD, minimising download times. The Yaroze has a debugger so you can watch the program running and see what's wrong with it.

Sunday: Visited the PlayStation Web site at http://www.playstation-europe.com/home/games/gm_links.html which has a link to the Net Yaroze site. Armed with a password, you can access the latest news, as well as a support page and links to other Web sites. And there are lots of Yaroze games to play and try out for yourself.

Monday: Well after only a few hours of work I almost have a working *Breakout*-like game. Sony has made it easy to put games together. What the Yaroze kit doesn't give you is tools for creating graphics and sounds. You'll need to use other applications, like *3DStudio*, to give your game a bit more life. Sony does provide lots of tools for converting common graphics and sound file formats to PlayStation formats. I'd certainly need to spend more time on my *Breakout* game to give it that professional finish.

Conclusion: Is it worth it? If you've not got a PlayStation and fancy having a go at games programming, then at £229 the Yaroze is an easy choice. It's more expensive than a normal PlayStation but the extra £130 is pretty comparable to what you'd spend setting your PC up to develop Windows games. You should certainly consider investing in *CodeWarrior* as it makes life quite a bit easier. The Net Yaroze's library is a lot more straightforward to start writing games in than Microsoft's DirectX technology and you have the added bonus of being able to play imported Japanese and US titles.

Get yourself a job in the games industry and the whole thing will pay for itself by your first coffee break.

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

As part of Sony's drive to establish the Net Yaroze, various universities have made the decision to run courses specifically geared towards educating students in the art of programming for the machine. A good example is that of Middlesex University, which this summer decided to offer a short Yaroze course. The demand was such that it decided to provide a second, in order to fulfil demand. In the UK alone, there are around 12 universities that have offered (and will offer) Yaroze tutorials, and this number is certain to grow.

The University of Abertay in Dundee has gone one step further. Thanks to a generous donation by Sony, students attending their Computing Degree – not those taking the BSc (Hons) Computer Games and Entertainment – can now take advantage of a dedicated Net Yaroze development laboratory.

Interested in finding out what's going on? Here's a brief list of the universities that have purchased Yarozes so far. If there are many people interested, there'll eventually be further additional workshops arranged. The best way to find out is to contact them directly.

- **University of West of England**, Bristol
- **Bournemouth University**, Bournemouth
- **Derby University**, Derby
- **St Helens College**, Merseyside
- **Southampton University**, Southampton
- **University of Plymouth**, Plymouth
- **Liverpool John Moores**, Liverpool
- **Grimsby College**, Grimsby
- **University of Lincolnshire and Humberside**, Hull
- **Middlesex University**, London

It's worth visiting the forum web site at **www.scee.sony.co.uk**, for details and contacts of all forthcoming Yaroze courses.

The Yaroze web site is packed with tips and free games to download.

What factors go into creating the PS# team who go on runs of straight wins, according to a reliable source, is based on a regular diary in Sony Europe offices? *FIFA* on there. Actua Soccer? If not, ISS '98? Not even close.

The answer, John Spoon, a Yaroze game programmer by Charles Chapman.

Over the past year, hundreds of Europe-based PlayStation owners have purchased, paid for, and received their Net Yaroze kits. Aimed at the programmer/enthusiast, the PlayStation™ and coloured a sleek black – rather than the traditional grey – it offers would-be gaming buffs the opportunity to create their own PlayStation games, ranked to either PC or Mac. Having anyone with a knowledge of the C programming language can get to grips with the system, with dedicated software, libraries, manuals, libraries of code routines and the necessary cables as standard. It's an inexpensive route into the lucrative games world.

If you know nothing about coding games, Yaroze won't turn you into a top developer overnight, but if you have a basic knowledge of the C programming language, the results can be surprising. "I've been interested in programming since I was about 10, and when Net Yaroze was just rumours going about, using C was Chris Charlwood. "Before that, I'd done a bit of BASIC programming. I pretty much used the Yaroze to learn C and games flow was the result of it."

Not a bad attempt at creating a game using the PlayStation and the C coding language. Wipeout Zero has become an incredible level of success. Winner of Best Yaroze Game and Best Overall Game at the recent Game Developer UK awards in Scotland and the Yaroze of Anonymous community, Chris was the first PlayStation to thank for his recent move into the games programming scene. "My old boss awards, someone from SCEE mentioned my name to the relevant company. Before that, I was looking for another programmer to help me with Wipeout Zero. I got back to me and I came down for an interview about two weeks."

Despite Chris's success as a programmer, he is by no means the only one. Yaroze members can upload their games onto the Internet for others to view. This can be a rewarding, informative experience. If people like your game, you get to hear a few words of praise, suggestions for improvements and maybe even a couple of offers of employment. If you're looking for a career in programming, knowledge of C is a requisite. Fortunately, there are many books out

magazines that can help. Similarly, there are now short courses available at many universities. Challenged if, as for other hand, you have a less than strong grasp of the programming language, the best to get started. Theory versus the coalface.

adulation. If, on the other hand, they feel that it still needs a bit of work, such feedback is invariably positive, practical and of real

NET BENEFITS

One of the key features of the Net Yaroze is the dedicated on-line service offered by Sony. With a modem and an account with an Internet Service Provider (ISP), Yaroze owners can get in touch with other programmers, receive technical support and swap tips, programs and advice from various sources. Sony is rightly proud of this 'club' atmosphere and the willingness of members to help their colleagues.

"There's a newsgroup that members and others can write with any problems you might have," says Chris Charlwood. "If

THE PROGRAMMERS

"Up until just recently I was working for a large company writing communications applications for Windows," says Yaroze member Ben Jones. "And honestly, I've thoroughly bored of that because I really wanted to write videogames. Fortunately, I had seen an advert for the Net Yaroze on the Official UK PlayStation Magazine coverdisk.

IF YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT CODING GAMES, YAROZE WON'T TURN YOU INTO A TOP DEVELOPER OVERNIGHT

So I got my Black PlayStation at Argos and proceeded to drive Sainsbury's to buy every book and mag I could get my hands on. Initially, I was amazed at how easy it was, with much of the hard work done for you by the kit manufacturers. In just four months I was able to create three different games."

The Yaroze may be a relatively simple piece of kit, but it requires a modicum of talent to get the most out of it. Many of the games created by programmers that contain the same, rather than the opposite. There are now approximately 3,000 Yaroze members worldwide. The quality of their work varies from a piece of code that's barely fit to run on a PlayStation to a game that's worthy of a full release.

Many Yaroze games are 'clones' of games that are already on the Sony market or Arcade. Old favourites such as Pac-Man, Tetris, Space Invaders and Asteroids have been popular with Yaroze coders as they

YAROZE HALL OF FAME

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF GAMES WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN PROGRAMMED WITH A YAROZE PLAYSTATION. LOAD UP THIS MONTH'S COVER DISK AND YOU CAN PLAY ALL 14 OF THESE GAMES IN FULL. PLAY THEM AND TRY TO RESIST THE INEVITABLE 'ONE MORE GO' SYNDROME.

CHARLES CHAPMAN

TOTAL SOCCER

A few PSM favourites, it's Kick Off and Sensible Soccer from the Amiga days rolled into one. It's fast. It's horribly playable. And we love it.

CHRIS CHADWICK

BLITTER BOY

Blitter Boy has scooped far too many awards to list here. And for good reason – it's a superb shoot 'em up. How's about a sequel, Chris?

GERHARD RITTENHOFER

MAH JONGG

Maddeningly addictive and simple videogame representation of the popular pastime. It was programmed in a mere two days, too...

R FREE WILLIAMS

PUSHY 2

It's a simple puzzle game, based on an old skool design. And it's pretty bloody difficult. Try it. You'll agree, we tell you...

BEN JAMES

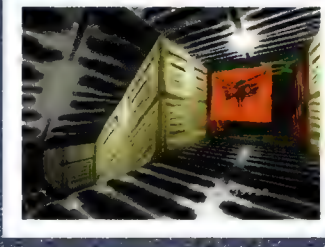
PSYCHON

Inspired, as Ben says, by Team 17's ancient Alien Breed games, Psychon is a top-down maze game with guns and loads of bodies to kill.

JAMES SHAUGHNESSY

GRAVITATION

Bit of cross-genre pollination, here. Mixing the classic inertia-oriented Thrust with racing game mainstays? A damn good idea, that.



STUART ASHLEY

CLONE

Like Doom with 4 players, Clone is a simplified (but playable) tribute to id's classic. The screaming of the monsters scares us every time. No, really.

RICHARD SMITHIES

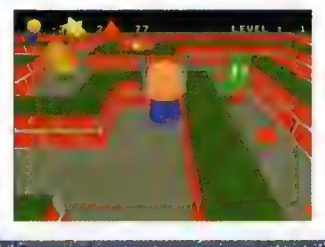
HOVER CAR RACING

It may look like old pants, but Hover Car Racing played host to a few mad races in the PSM office. We do prefer Circuit Breakers, though...

RITTENHOFER, M TUCMANDI

ROCKS 'N' GEMS

It's Boulder Dash on the PlayStation! If ever a game deserved a 'yes update, it's Boulder Dash. And here it is in fine form. Watch for Tucan!



LARS BARSTAD

THE INCREDIBLE CONEMAN

Another entry for the evergreen Pac Man principle. This time it's in full rotational 3D. Shame about the horrible music...

TEAM FATAL

TERRA INCOGNITA

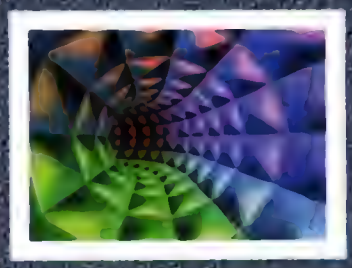
Stunning example of how homework can lead to near commercial-standard Yaroze games. An thoroughly enjoyable platform adventure.

ED FERMMEVER
HAUNTED MAZE

Like a strange, spotless version of *Pac Man*, *Haunted Maze* is refreshingly simple. It's also annoyingly compulsive, once you get started...

SCOTT EVANS
BOUNCER 2

An interesting idea, this. Two little chaps bouncing on a moving platform, and the idea's to destroy blocks a la *Breakout*. It's tricky, too.



LEWIS EVANS
BETWEEN THE EYES

A harmonious racing game that takes place in winding tunnels. *Between The Eyes* has a nice line in colourful visuals effects. Groovy.

THE YAROZE IS REMARKABLY EASY TO GET TO GRIPS WITH...

CHOOSE LIFE. CHOOSE A CAREER. CHOOSE YAROZE.

FURTHER DETAILS

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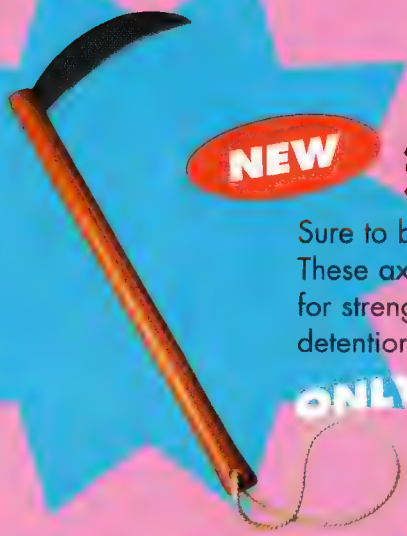

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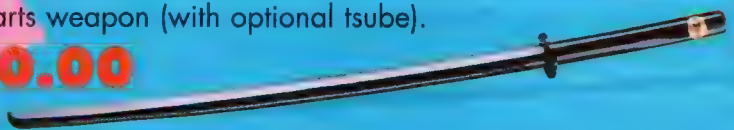

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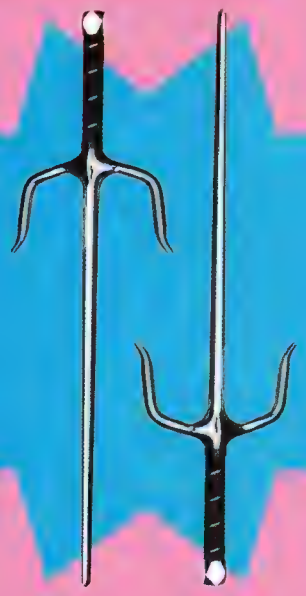

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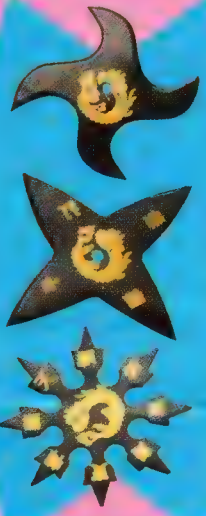

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PSM RATING

10	*PSM* is prepared to award a golden '10' to games which are perfect.
9	A splendid piece of software – recommended without prejudice.
8	Very, very good. Add it to your collection forthwith, if not sooner.
7	A great title with minor irritations, but still a worthy purchase.
6	A case of 'Why did they do that?' Playable but with some dodgy bits.
5	Straight average. Unoriginal or flawed, but still worth buying – just.
4	Below average. Probably has some serious gameplay or lifespan flaws.
3	Looking pretty bad. Maybe worth borrowing for a couple of days.
2	Borderline crap. Technically inept, poorly structured and short-lived.
1	A product without merit of any sort. Naff beyond human endurance.
0	Black coffee coaster in the shape of a CD. Dreadful, awful tat.
	Special games which deserve to go on your must-buy list are awarded a StarPlayer logo.

What's the score, eh? Why on earth does the videogames industry use a percentage as its standard grading system? It's ludicrous to encumber yourself with a rating of such magnitude that it seems impossible to award the ultimate mark of 100 per cent to any game you ever come across, no matter how good it is. We'd happily award *Final Fantasy VII* and *Tekken 3* the 10/10 they deserve, because they are games you must have.

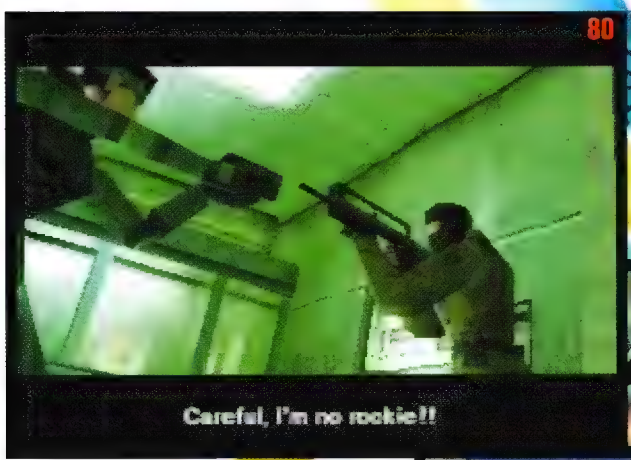
A percentage gives the impression of an exact science, but you can't tell us that when a mag awards *Croc* 91 per cent for sound, it's because the staff writer has sat in a sound-proof booth ticking through a list of 300 questions before applying some complex mathematical formula. We mark games out of 10. It isn't an exact science, but then it doesn't pretend to be. And it enables us to award games a perfect mark without too much heartache.

Our scoring system is simple and accurate, and if you've been with us since the start, you'll know you can trust it when purchasing games.

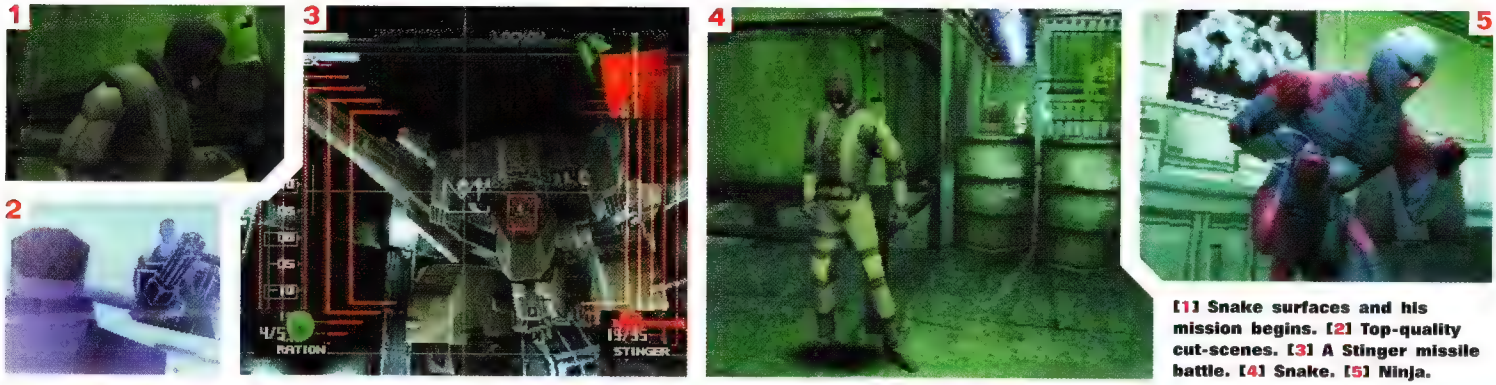
PlayTest

REVIEWED

Metal Gear Solid	80
Akuji the Heartless	90
Viva Football	92
Sensible Soccer	94
Max Power Racing	96
Poy Poy 2	102
Dodgem Arena	104
Player Manager Season 98-99	106
Shanghai True Valor	109
Pool Hustler	111
Hugo	112



ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE



[1] Snake surfaces and his mission begins. [2] Top-quality cut-scenes. [3] A Stinger missile battle. [4] Snake. [5] Ninja.

Metal Gear Solid

Does *Metal Gear* live up to the hype? What do you think? Indulge yourself in the PlayStation's best game yet.

[1] We recommend you foolishly take time to admire the superb muzzle flashes from your enemy's weaponry. [2] Hmm, that's a mighty big robot.

Official PlayStation Magazine STARPLAYER

PlayStation ON THE CD

If you buy one game in 1999 make sure it's *Metal Gear Solid*. The odds of there being another game as fulfiling, rewarding and exquisitely surprising as this before the year's out are cheese-wire slim. Stop reading. Go and buy it now.

Metal Gear Solid is an action movie which you play on your PlayStation. And just like its Hollywood inspiration, it has a tightly scripted plot and a whole host of brilliant set pieces. And yet you never feel as if you're just watching the action unfold – you're making it happen. Dedicate a couple of hours a night to the game, opening every door, taking out every guard, examining, using and having fun with every gadget and you'll be in raptures for a fortnight. However, cane *Metal Gear* for 12 hours solid (no pun intended) and you'll finish it... Which presents us with two of the game's problems.

First of all, how does *PSM* review a game where the divulging of any details will conceivably spoil your enjoyment and shave another hour off that play time? Secondly how can we recommend shelling out for any game that, in the hands of persistent, rash and uninterested gamers could be finished on the same day it was bought? We'll deal with each point in turn.

Firstly we'll just have to sneak the cat out of the bag a couple of times but we'll draw a gauze-like veil over some of the tastier (and more bizarre) surprises. You can avoid any potential upset by stopping reading now. That's now. We said now. Now... Right. Secondly we implore you to glean every ounce of worth out of the game. Not to rush headlong from one end to the other. Not to ignore or skip FMA sequences and dialogues. Not to leave large areas unexplored. Not to buy or follow any strategy guides. In short do not do anything that you have done with any of your other ▶

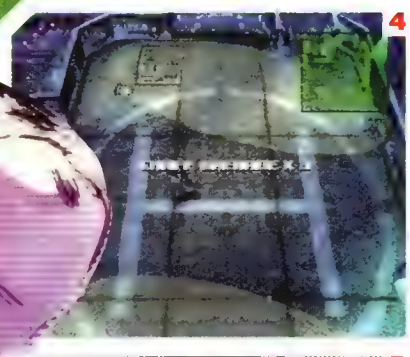
AS WE'RE SURE YOU'RE AWARE BY NOW, WADING IN WITH GUNS BLAZING IS NOT THE WAY FORWARD...

■ PUBLISHER:	**Konami**	■ DEVELOPER:	**In-house**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**February**	■ AGE RESTRICTION:	**15 and over**
■ PRICE:	**£39.99**	■ STYLE:	**Sneak 'em up**

1

2

3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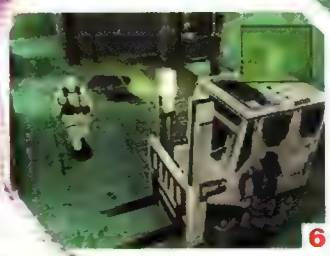
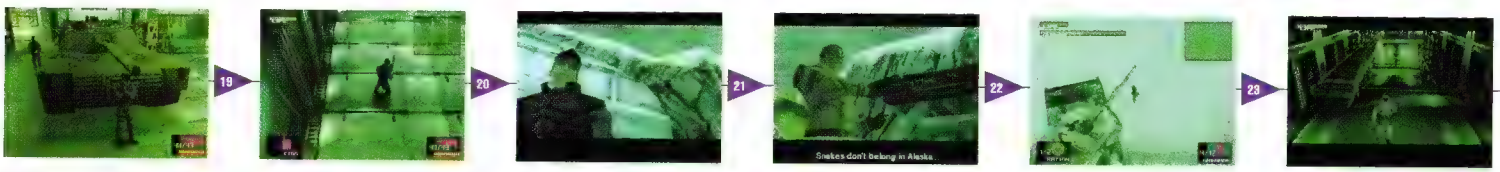

6

[1] Snake charms his way into Mei Ling's pants remotely. [2] Be prepared for amazingly lengthy cut-scenes. [3] By pressing against scenery the camera whizzes round for an ace view. [4] Avoid the searchlights. [5] Mind if we borrow your jeep? Thought not. [6] Psst. Snake. Behind you...

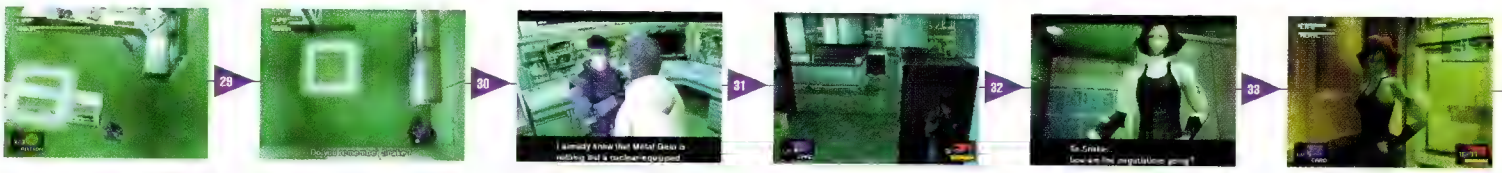
WARNING!
SPOILER ALERT!
Reading these words and looking at these screenshots may give away some surprises. Look and read this lot at your own risk!

Snake begins the game at the base's dock. And must pick his way across to the elevator and up to

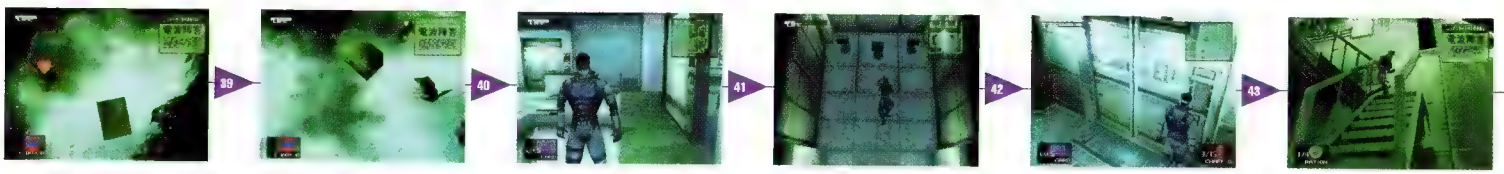
You emerge on a gantry above the tank hanger. The elevator takes you down to the prison cells where, as one of your main objectives the Darpa Chief, needs



Getting outside the tank hanger takes some more Meryl-assistance and Vulcan Raven is waiting for you in the snow... The Nuke building is a vast and

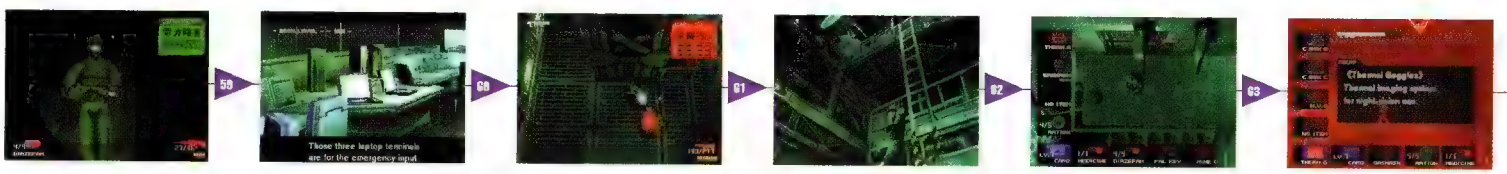


Once the Ninja is pulped you can make a friend in Otacon, the nuclear tech-head. A bit more sneaking will have you finally meeting Meryl face to face. The



The dogs love Snake's urine-stained cardboard box and a bit of backtracking sees him finally getting his hands on the sniper rifle, essential for taking out

It's Stinger missile versus Hind helicopter. Once removed there's the small matter of invisible stealth troops to take out. Things really hot up in the furnace.

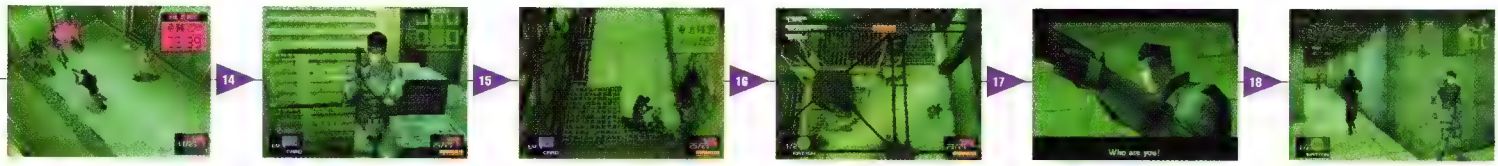


This guard won't know what hit him. And the nuke's shut-off switch is there for the pushing. A bit of jiggery pokery with the shape-changing key will sort

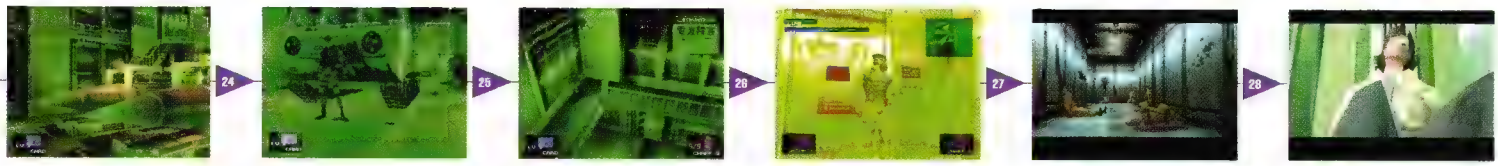
Snake's wily ways are too much for the beast however, and after thrashing Liquid once more he makes his escape in a handily placed jeep – replete with

Metal Gear Solid

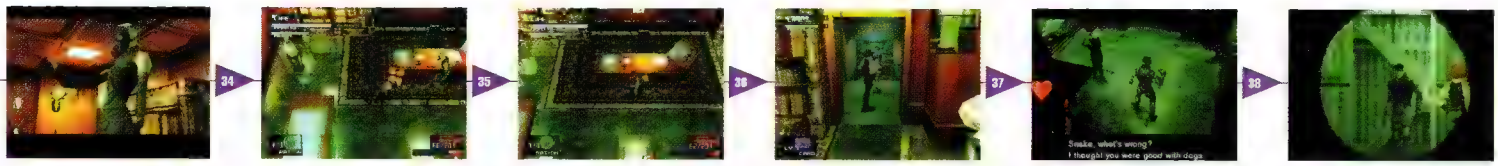
the base's entrance. The best way inside is via a tiny air shaft high up on a vigorously patrolled balcony. Sneak past, crawl through and you're inside.



rescuing. Clever Meryl, breaks you out of the cell and you head down for your first boss battle – with the deadly gunman Revolver Ocelot. Keep moving!

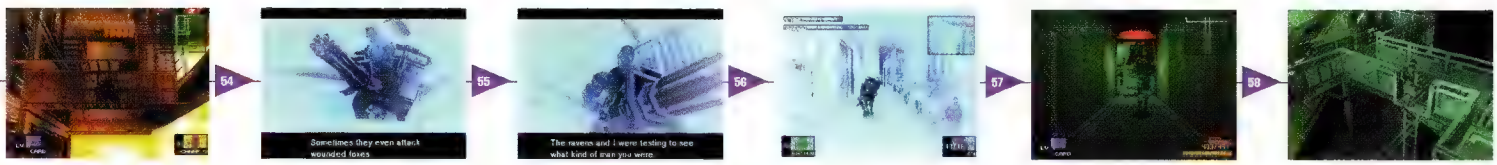


heavily guarded hanger where only expert sneakers will make it down to the next level. After a flirtation with electrocution and poison gas it's Ninja time!

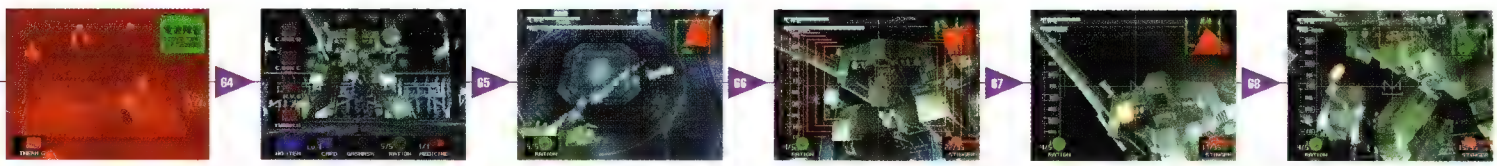


way ahead is barred by Psycho Mantis who provides one of the game's trickier battles before allowing Snake through to the chilly caverns below the base.

Sniper Wolf. Revolver Ocelot puts Snake through a gruelling torture sesh before you scale the radio tower and lock horns with arch enemy Liquid Snake.

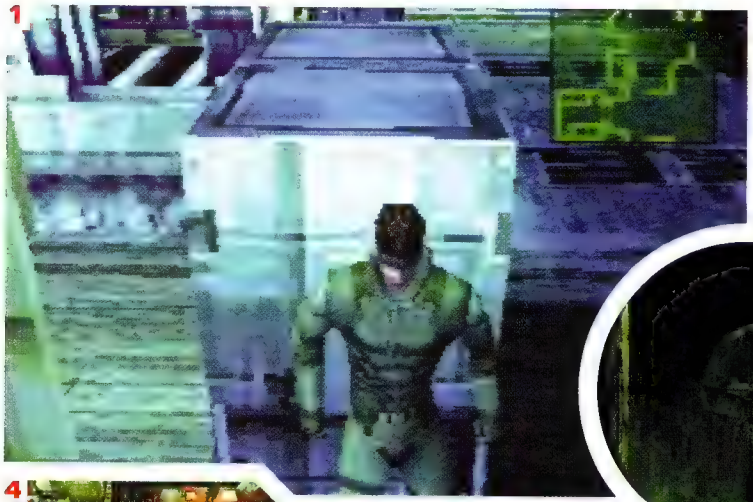


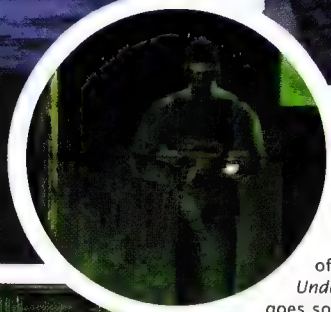
The complex gantries lead you to a final encounter with the lightly chilled Vulcan Raven. Metal Gear itself is getting closer and the ultimate battle is nigh.



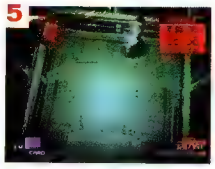
out the trio of computers and Liquid fires up Metal Gear to enact his revenge. The skyscraper-sized behemoth whirrs into missile-slinging life. Jesuschrist!

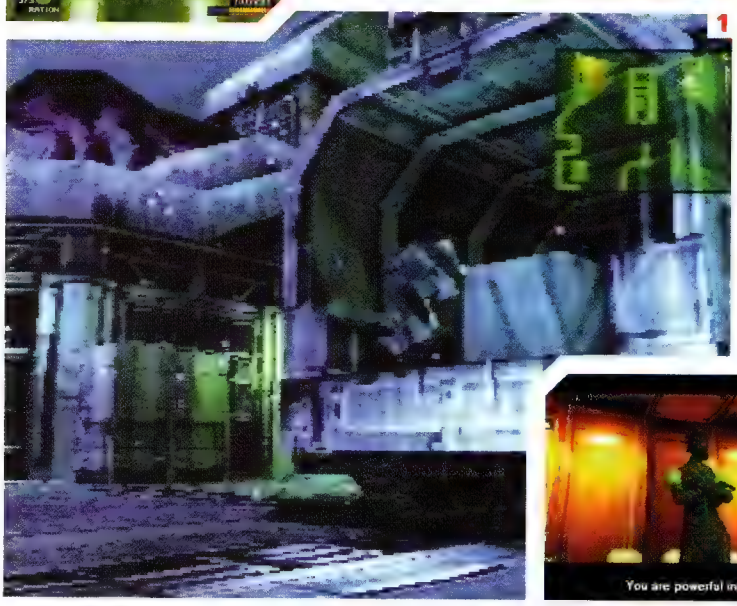
heavy machine gun on board. Eventually daylight emerges and Snake saddles up with his buddy and rides off into the sunset. Literally. Game over man.





[1] Use the scanner [top right] to find your way around. [2] Snake's sneaking suit keeps out the cold. [3] Meryl and Snake in machine gun mayhem. [4 – 6] Gorgeous isn't it?

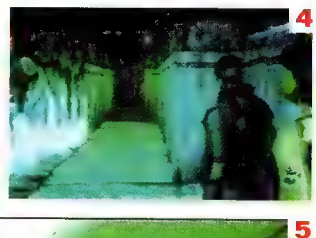




▶ games – *Metal Gear* is not like any of your other games.

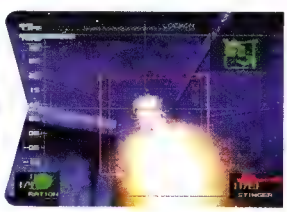
Describing *MGS* as a combination of *Tomb Raider, Resident Evil, Die Hard, Under Siege* and every *James Bond* film ever goes some way to purveying the game's ethos. Snake is steered (best with the analogue stick) around 3D areas, of which there are around 50, each around the size of a trio of football pitches. Exit each one and the next is loaded. Die during your attempts to cross the Blast Furnace or Heliport and so on and you're dumped back at the point where you entered. **Each area is filled with security cameras, hidden trapdoors, landmines and most famously, patrolling guards with guns.** Picking your way through each area – perhaps finding and picking up some infrared goggles or chaff grenades *en route* – is therefore fraught with danger. As we're sure you're aware by now, wading in with guns blazing is not the way forward in *Metal Gear*.

GUARDS WILL HAPPILY PATROL UNTIL THEY HEAR A NOISE OR UNTIL YOU FOOLISHLY CROSS THEIR LINE OF SIGHT...



SOLID VERSUS LIQUID

In what has to be the most unfair battle in gaming history, Solid must do battle with Liquid as he bears down from the cockpit of a heavily armed helicopter. Not really on, is it?



After a mighty gun battle Snake emerges at the top of a building to find this waiting. Erk.

[1] Hide in the back. [2] Knock it off, Freakboy. [3] A cachet of bullets tops up your piece. [4] Snake and Meryl tiptoe on. [5] You could have someone's eye out with that.

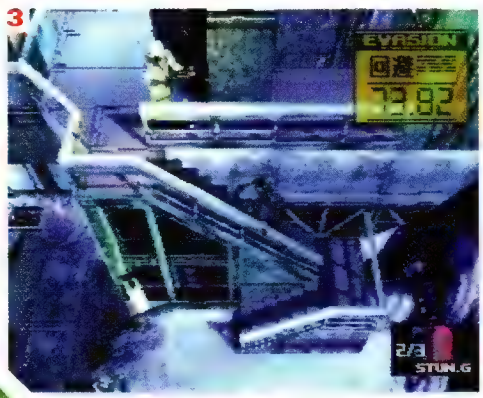
Metal Gear Solid

The name of the game here is stealth. It's a radical new style of gameplay (soundly ripped off recently by the likes of *Tenchu* and even parts of *Tomb Raider 3*). Guards will happily patrol until they hear a noise or until you foolishly cross their line of sight whereupon they'll break off and come to investigate. A comical question mark above their head shows their intention. If they spot you this is replaced by an exclamation mark, a short siren squalls and your Dual Shock pad nearly jumps out of your hands. He and his mates (who come running over) will then set to shooting you to death. The options are to stand and fight (possible if you have a tasty weapon to hand), run for it (if you can evade a guard's attentions for long enough they'll rather unrealistically forget all about you and get back to their patrols) or die like a dog. Which is often not as foolish an option as it sounds, as you're usually only put back a matter of yards, to the start of the area and such minor setbacks are preferable to huge loses of health and mis-aimed ammo. Odd one that, and *PSM* would have preferred it if the penalties had been far greater. Also, the ability to save your game during any area seems a little too good to be true, and is something which further whittles away at that precious lifespan.

Driving the game forward is a plot as convoluted and fanciful as that of any Steven Seagal flick and one which is dished out at regular intervals via Snake's Codec (radio) which buzzes at the most inopportune moments requiring you to hit Select, pause the action and listen and watch as Snake engages in conversation. ▶

1

3



2

[1] The Nikita missiles allow you to play from an 'in-missile' view. [2] If only you had that Level 3 keycard you could get them. [3] Clump. Clump. Arrghhh!

METAL GEAR CAST

A cast of over 20 voice actors were employed converting the original (unintelligible) Japanese voices into US and Euro-friendly tones, each waxing lyrical throughout the game. Here are the stars of the show.

SOLID SNAKE

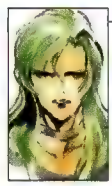
Forced out of retirement for just one more mission. Again. This ice-cold killing machine carries out orders without question.

LIQUID SNAKE

The result of a freaky experiment to breed the perfect human. This hairy psychotic Englishman has a grudge against Snake – but why?

REVOLVER OCELOT

Liquid's right-hand man is an excellent shot and master of torture techniques. Quick wits and slippery moves are needed to beat him.



SNIPER WOLF

She's beautiful. She's intelligent. She's got a ruddy big gun and she knows how to use it. Beware the ominous flicker of her laser sights.

DONALD ANDERSON

Snake's old boss. It's he who lures Snake out of retirement to take on the mission. With his niece Meryl at risk he wanted the very best.

MERYL SILVERBURGH

Anderson's niece and a bad-assed soldier in her own right. Trapped in the base during the coup she helps out with her insider knowledge.

DECOY OCTOPUS

A slippery customer and a master of disguise. Is it who you think or is it Decoy Octopus? You won't know for sure until it's too late.

MASTER MILLER

An ex-comrade of Snake who's on-hand to dish out (some very bloody obvious) advice. Anyone who wears sunglasses at night is an arse.

SECRETARY OF DEFENCE

The good guy's big boss, lording it over even Anderson. What this guy says, goes, even if it's contrary to what Snake or Anderson knows.

OTACON

Crazy-haired scientist who's sterling work is perverted for evil ends by ArmsTech. What did he think they were building for chrissakes?

DARPA CHIEF

The reason Snake is here. This important military boss is being held hostage on the base. Your first objective is find and rescue him.

PRESIDENT AT

Boss of the ArmsTech weapons company and your second objective in need of rescuing. But what was he doing on the base anyway?

MEI LING

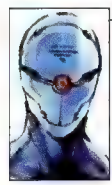
Teenage foxstress in charge of tweaking Snake's codec. She's also a bit of a whizz with the ancient chinese proverbs. Somewhat annoyingly.

PSYCHO MANTIS

Mmmm. Rubber. *Metal Gear's* gimp can read minds, walk through walls and levitate. Even scarier than you first suspected then.

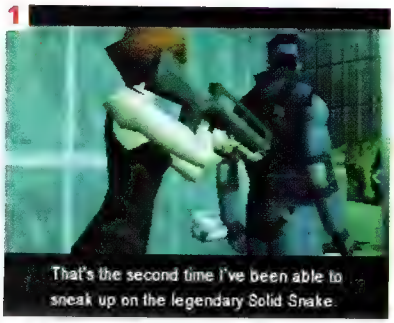
DR NAOMI

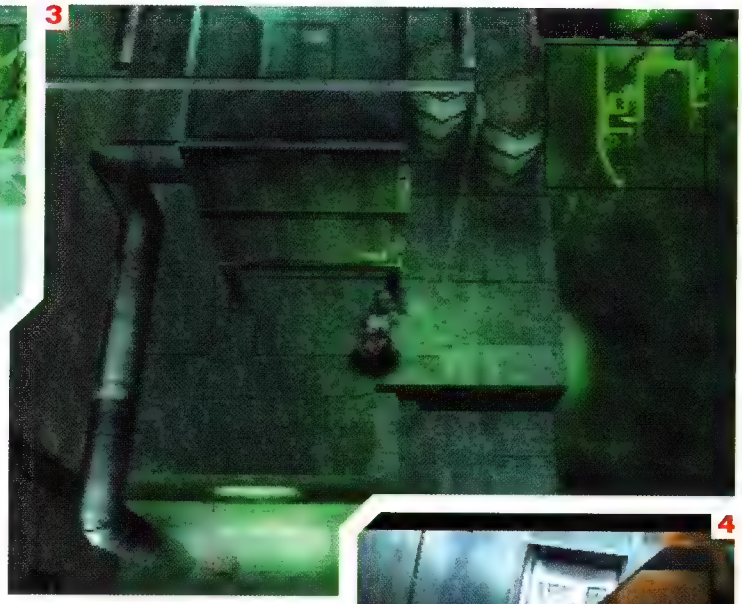
Stern-faced science buff with Snake's health at heart. She tends his in-body nanomachines and has knowledge of a peculiar virus...



NINJA

***MGS's* second freak. Able to become invisible at will and leap tall boxes with a single bound. But just who hides inside Ninja's hi-tech suit?**





[1] Despite this screenshot, *PSM* advises you play with the caption's off. That way it's more like a film and even less like a game. [2] Raven's runabout. [3] Solitary Snake. [4] Looks like you'd best not open that door.

▶ These scenes are created with the same tasteful artwork as the game's packaging and promotional material – the work of Yoji Shinkawa. In these days of hi-res renders and CGI imagery the hand-sketched faces of the Codec characters with their two frames of animation will furrow the brows of fresher gamers. *PSM* prefers to think that such rash moves against convention only help distance *Metal Gear* from other hi-tech war wannabes. In fact the game is littered with what can only be described as post-gaming age curios and highly original turns of gameplay. For example, even the built-in training mode helps bolster *MGS's* position as 'more than just a game.' Rather than featuring real in-game scenery for the training missions (which guide you through sneaking and combat in different ever trickier tests) they are created using cheesy computer graphic 'VR' imagery, as if admitting that this section of *MGS* is indeed just a game but thereby suggesting that the rest of the experience really is *real*...

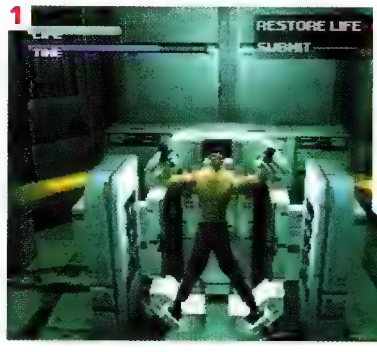
In the game the characters taunt you about how often you've saved your game (chastising you for being both reckless or cautious). Mei Ling, your radio operator dishes out a measureless stream of ancient Chinese (and yet relevant) proverbs. The game features the best use of the analogue pad this side of *Gran Turismo*, with one particular instance being so clever as to make you want to applaud. The tasks which must be undertaken throughout the game show similar originality. For example you must at one stage hide inside a box, get it urinated on by wolves and thereby pass by unbitten. Elsewhere, your contact is disguised as one of five guards and will not reveal herself until the remaining four guards are killed. How do you avoid taking out your lady-friend in error? By studying the way they each walk and cornering and killing the clumping males. Later, near-invisible guards attack in stealth suits, missiles need steering along corridors and, perhaps weirdest of all, you must contact a colleague via your Codec having been told that their radio frequency is written on the CD case. After padding around for hours looking for it you realise that it really is *actually on the CD case* with the required number being on the back of the box. Outstanding.

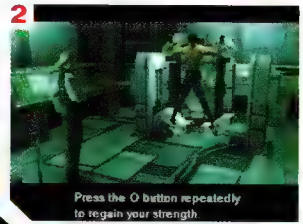
Certain tasks are only accomplished with certain hardware and certain hardware can only be found with

> SCENES ARE CREATED USING THE SAME TASTEFUL ARTWORK AS THE GAME'S PACKAGING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL...

NO PAIN – NO GAIN

A standout set-piece is this one involving Snake being tortured by the fiendish Revolver Ocelot. Submit and the game channels you through to the 'bad' ending. Resist and escape and you'll get the 'better' one.





[1] As the test goes on the time bar gets longer and your arm weaker. [2] Ocelot dishes out in-game instructions.

Metal Gear Solid

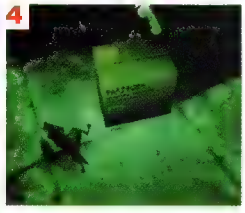
RANKINGS REVEALED

At *Metal Gear's* end you're awarded a ranking, an animal name ranging from the preposterous to the fearsome. Replay the game again and up your ranking using this handy tableau for tips.

Rank	Easy	Normal	Hard	Extreme
1	Hound	Doberman	Fox	Boss
	Found by enemy four times or less. Killed 25 enemies or less. Use one ration or less. No continues. Finished game in three hours or less.			
2	Pigeon	Falcon	Hawk	Eagle
	Finished game in three hours or less			
3	Piranha	Shark	Jaws	Orca
	Killed 250 enemies or more.			
4	Pig	Elephant	Mammoth	Whale
	Used 130 rations or more.			
5	Cat	Deer	Zebra	Hippopotamus
	Saved 80 times or more.			
6	Koala	Capibara	Sloth	Giant Panda
	Finished game in 18 hours or more.			
7	Chicken	Mouse	Rabbit	Ostrich
	Combinations regarding conditions of Ranks four, five, and six.			
8	Puma	Leopard	Panther	Jaguar
9	Komodo	Dragon	Iguana	Alligator/Crocodile
10	Mongoose	Hyena	Jackal	Tasmanian Devil
11	Spider	Tarantula	Centipede	Scorpion
12	Flying Squirrel	Bat	Flying Fox	Night Owl

Formula: X = number of times found. Y = (10) x (number you killed - 25) NB. If number you killed - 25 is zero or less, Y is set at 100.

	0<y<4	8<y<16	8<y<16	16<y<20	20<y
0<x<30	Rank 8	Rank 8	Rank 10	Rank 11	Rank 11
30<x<55	Rank 9	Rank 10	Rank 10	Rank 10	Rank 12
55<x	Rank 9	Rank 9	Rank 10	Rank 12	Rank 12



[1] I don't think they're going to miss from there. [2] Lovely Meryl, she may be tough but she's all laydee. [3] Run for it! [4] More delicious cardboard box antics.

[1] This battle on the stairs, with guards approaching from above and behind, is particularly fraught. [2] Beware the Ninja's flashing blade. [3] Each area presents its own unique challenge. [4] Bring out the big guns.

the use of certain other hardware. The scope to explore and experiment is vast. Indeed, no other game in PlayStation history has prompted so much recanting of techniques and discoveries in the pub as this – there are so many different *ways* of playing the game. Guns and weaponry organise themselves onto the right shoulder buttons with gadgets – everything from a pack of fags to a mine detector – being on the left. This enables you to have one gizmo and one gun racked up and ready to rumble at a time, which is only a pain when you've got to take your gas mask off to use your keycard, but other than this brief moment of lunacy the system works very well.

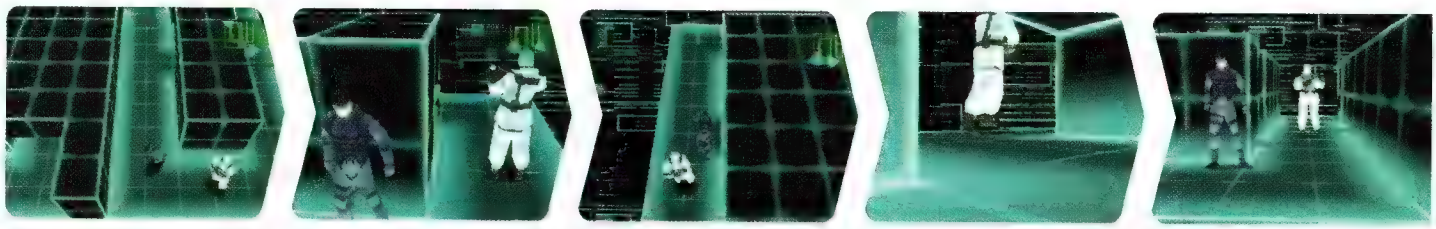
Best hardware of all however, is not the sniper rifle or diazepam tablets (you'll have to work out their use for yourself) but the lowly cardboard boxes. There are three in the game and using one causes Snake to disappear underneath, avoiding the attentions of guards who'll give the box a once-over before leaving it in peace. Once the coast is clear Snake can pad about underneath it, baffling the guards further. Hilarious. No, really. Best of all using a box in the back of a truck will have you (and it) transported to the location written on its side. Handy for getting around the game fast. Which – as we've said – is something you really ought not to be doing...

You see, the Japanese like games short and easy. They like to play for a bit, win and feel good about themselves. Which makes *Metal Gear* their favourite game. It's as linear as a film, packed with as much dialogue (you spend lots of time sitting, listening and ▶

Metal Gear Solid

IN TRAINING

The VR Training mode is almost a game in itself. *PSM* recommends you play this through to its end before you begin the game proper. Wading in without first perfecting the Wall-slide, Crouch 'N' Crawl and the Neck-snap will leave you floundering like a kipper. And once you've completed every lesson there's the lure of the time trial to keep you coming back and tweaking your mastery.



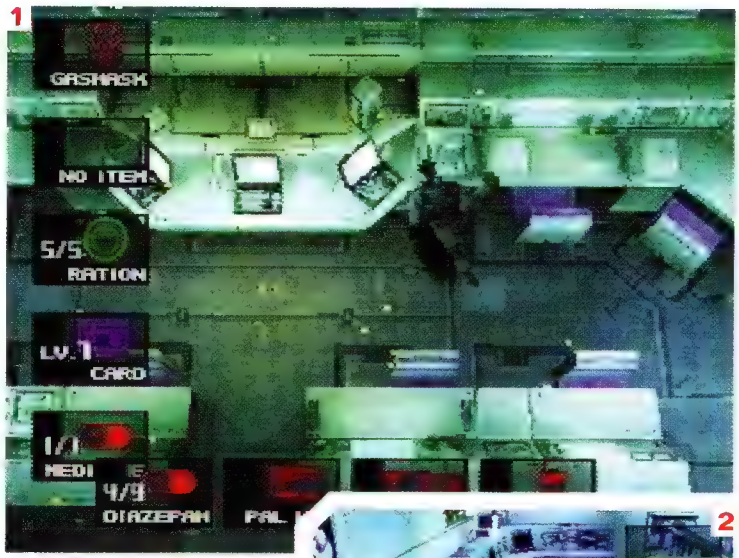
CHARACTERS TAUNT YOU ABOUT HOW OFTEN YOU'VE SAVED YOUR GAME (CHASTISING YOU FOR BEING BOTH RECKLESS OR CAUTIOUS).

▶ watching rather than playing) and, as stated, you can, if you want to, finish it in a day. The first time we played we clocked up 20 hours, the second 12 and the third under eight. For lifespan think *Resident Evil 2*, not *Tomb Raider*.

Some longevity is introduced by the two possible endings and the exquisite endurance test you must pass about halfway through the game in order to get the better of the two possible endings (see No Pain – No Gain boxout). Some players will simply never experience the proper (admittedly only slightly different) ending thanks to their weak wrists. There are also three difficulty levels Easy, Normal and Hard (up from one in the Jap version) and there's that excellent VR Training mode to have a crack at too. Ultimately though it's up to you, as the *Metal Gear* player to abide by the laws of the game and not ruin it for yourself. You must not cheat, or take any shortcuts (there are some), you must not play in Easy mode and you should try and squeeze every nugget of action out of the game as you play. Play with subtitles off, forcing yourself to listen to the excellent plot unfold, kill every guard you find. Explore every room, every corridor, have fun and work on getting a good end-of-game ranking. *Metal Gear Solid* is just asking to be teased and dominated, and any gamer wanting to lock horns with the ultimate in plot, action and originality must grab a copy immediately, especially at the reasonable price of £39.99 (when they could have easily milked £50 out of you).

One last thought, just in case you're still worried about that longevity and wondering if *MGS* is worth the cash. Go and play our demo on this month's disc – containing four huge areas. Now try and tell us that you don't want to play another 46. Exactly.

Daniel Griffiths



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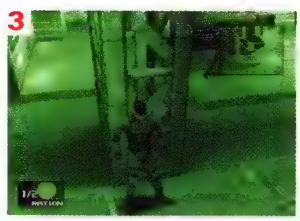

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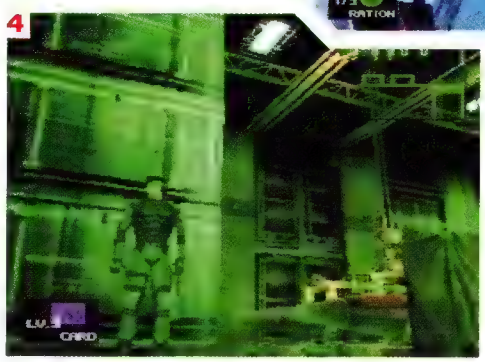

4

[1] Choose your weapons. [2] Invisible Ninja. [3 - 4] Danger lurks around every packing case and warhead.

Alternatively...

Metal Gear Solid	10/10	*PSM42*
Tomb Raider 3	10/10	*PSM40*
Resident Evil 2	9/10	*PSM39*
Tenchu	7/10	*PSM38*

VERDICT

GRAPHICS:	Hi-gloss, hi-fidelity perfection	10
GAMEPLAY:	Exciting, gripping, frighteningly original fun	10
LIFESPAN:	Big enough. But only just	8

The best game ever made, packing a gameplay, graphics and originality triple punch. Unputdownable while it lasts and unforgettable when it's finished.

10 out of 10

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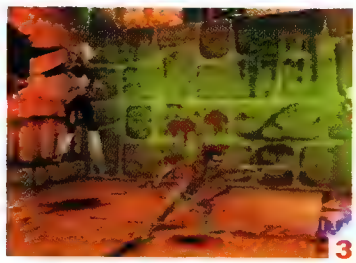
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[1] These ankle-biters are a real problem especially when backed up by a bloke with a stick. [2] *Akuji* has gore-a-plenty but it's quite clever too, chain nets like these prevent a fall from upper platforms proving lethal. [3] Fireball demons like this one are best obliterated with a spell. [4] The platform bits are never too frustrating. [5] Wicked graphics. No, really evil.

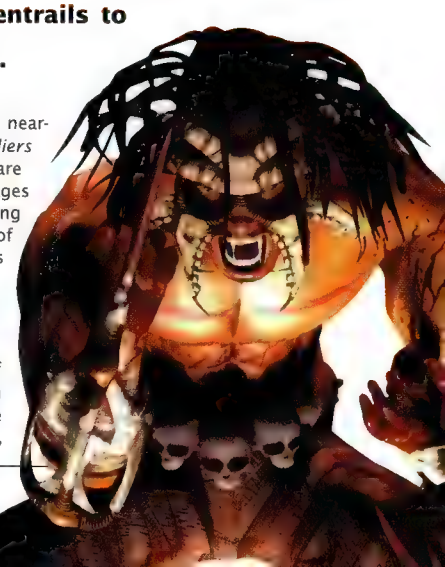
Akuji The Heartless

Go to Hell! Alright then... Blimey, watch it with that scythe. Keep your entrails to yourself. Baron Samedi with the voice of Barry White? Hmm...

We can't wait for the decorators of *Changing Rooms* to open up a tin of paint only for Carol Smilie to squeal "but it's chicken-blood crimson!" Let's see the designers plump for a few shrunken heads with bead curtains using human hair and Handy Andy knocking together a coffee table out of shins. Until that day we'll have to make do with the satanically stylish *Akuji The Heartless*.

TWISTED VINES BEDECK THE STEPS OF DESERTED TEMPLES AND SPLUTTERING TORCHES LIGHT YOUR WAY INTO THE DARKNESS.

This is a good 3D game. As opposed to the near-shambolic efforts of the likes of *Small Soldiers* the chambers and landscapes of *Akuji* are seamless and well detailed. Graven images glower at you from out of pools of boiling blood, twisted vines bedeck the steps of deserted temples and spluttering torches light your way into the darkness. Character-wise it's pretty accomplished too, introducing you to grim reapers in snappy red robes, legless torsos armed with a stinger where their spine used to be and all manner of miscreations. It's not perfect. Although tightened up from the preview version, the views and controls do occasionally go AWOL,



ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER:	Eidos	■ DEVELOPER:	Crystal Dynamics
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ AGE RESTRICTION:	15 and over
■ PRICE:	TBA	■ STYLE:	3D adventure

[1] Something's a-stirring in the jungle and it sure ain't David Attenborough. [2] A gentle difficulty curve gradually soars. [3] Weren't you in *Scream 2*?

especially when you've got your back to the wall and are trying to jump sideways. There's no denying though, that next to most 3D games *Akuji* is a pleasure to play.

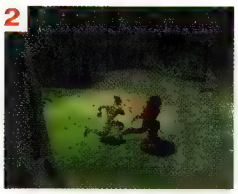
Initially its linear structure was a bit worrying. *Akuji* is one of those games that leads you by the nose from area to area, each runestone (they act as keys) opening up a new set of chambers to explore. The puzzles are pretty basic too, mostly consisting of shifting the odd block or firing at a lofty switch. While the game shows no inclination to let you explore more broadly, the puzzles and platformy bits get gradually tougher as you progress. Soon you'll need to leap onto invisible platforms and perform triple salchow dismounts off monkey bars just to keep up. Although you can only save at the end of each level there are plenty of restart points, handy considering the rotating knives, acid lakes and fireball-vomiting demons that await. *Akuji's* step-by-step approach may annoy some but at least it stops you trying to do the right things in the wrong order.

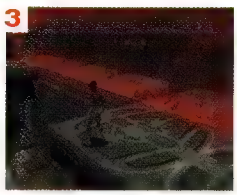
THERE ARE PLENTY OF RESTART POINTS, HANDY CONSIDERING THE ROTATING KNIVES, ACID LAKES AND FIREBALL-VOMITING DEMONS...

In terms of gameplay there's very little you could call original in here. Jumping, climbing, blasting, crouching and shoving are, *après*-Lara, the minimum we expect from a top notch adventure. Yet there's something agreeably straightforward about the way the game approaches its many tasks. The no-nonsense spell system is particularly classy with easily identifiable pick-ups, a first-person view for aiming projectile spells and lots of defensive, close-range sorcery.

Akuji is a game that will appeal to those who like the idea of *Tomb Raider* but find that in practice it's too frustrating. You don't need to spend hours at it to have fun – pick up a couple of spells and you're ready to blast, hack and leap your way to salvation. The *real* shame is that *Soul Reaver* could well eclipse this intuitive and enjoyable mix of platforming and combat.

Pete Wilton





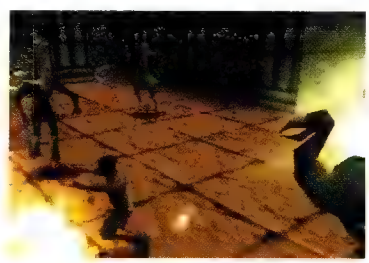
[1] Don't fireball these stumpy fellas when a good slash will do the trick. [2] Don't play it in the dark. [3] The views are good even if now and then they cause problems. [4] Climb like the fiends of Hell are after you! Oh.

Alternatively...

Tomb Raider 3	10/10	*PSM40*
Tomb Raider 2	10/10	*PSM28*
Resident Evil 2	9/10	*PSM31*
Akuji The Heartless	8/10	*PSM42*

VOODOO SCHMOODOO

Magic in games usually comes with all kinds of pointy-hatted pretensions when we all know it's just a good excuse for chucking fireballs about. *Akuji The Heartless'* magic system is simple but effective without a magic point or mana meter in sight. Simply pick up skull-shaped spells, flick between them using the triangle button and then blast away. Yay.



VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	Sinister. Gory. Bloody great 8
■ GAMEPLAY:	Not very original but fun nonetheless 7
■ LIFESPAN:	Large but not too hard – which is refreshing 7

No-nonsense adventure with an attractive evil sheen. *Akuji* snuggles between *Doom* and *Tomb Raider* but (be afraid) it could just be warming the bed for *Soul Reaver*.

8 OUT OF 10

1

2

5

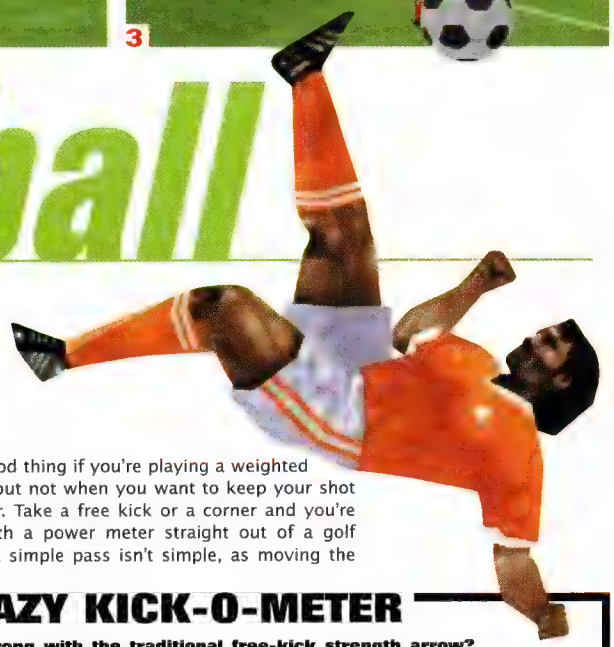
4

3

[1] Field a team packed with football greats. Pit Keegan against Shearer, Shilton against Seaman. [2] Kicking the ball in the general direction of the goal is relatively easy, curling it in isn't. [3] It's easy-peasy to rob the player who receives this throw-in. [4] Not the prettiest player on the park, *Viva* still looks clear if not particularly flash. [5] The goalies are dead reliable... most of the time.

Viva Football

Las Vegas. The Revolution. El Presidente. Some things should have "Viva" shouted loudly before you say them. But maybe not football...



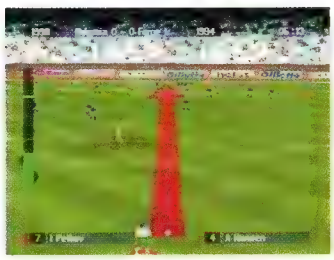
Re-writing football history must be the dream of most footy fans. Who doesn't want to erase the memory of *that* penalty (1998), or indeed *that* penalty (1996), if you support England, or every Brazil game ever if you're Scottish. In fact fans around the world must feel the same way, sure that if they could just go back in time everything would be okay. Well *Viva Football* gives you the chance to conclusively prove whether that is in fact the case, or whether the reason the great teams of the past didn't win was because they weren't that great after all.

Things start promisingly enough. Pick from 1,035 historically accurate teams, play in one of 323 stadia, predictably take on England 1998 with England 1966 just to see who really is the best. *Viva*'s looks are above average without being exceptional, it's like a diluted *ISS Pro* or a not-so-realistic-looking *FIFA '99*. Pick up the controller though and it feels very different from either. *Viva* is complex. It's a game full of moves that alter depending on how long you depress each button which is a good thing if you're playing a weighted through-ball but not when you want to keep your shot under the bar. Take a free kick or a corner and you're presented with a power meter straight out of a golf game. Even a simple pass isn't simple, as moving the

VIVA IS COMPLEX. IT'S A GAME FULL OF MOVES THAT ALTER DEPENDING ON HOW YOU DEPRESS EACH BUTTON.

KER-AZY KICK-O-METER

What's wrong with the traditional free-kick strength arrow? Obviously something, because *Viva* replaces this stalwart feature of footy games with a swing-o-meter familiar to golf game fans. Basically, you have to get your timing spot on or hoof a wayward ball. Innovation is a good thing when it delivers more enjoyment or more control, sadly this new system bestows neither.



■ PUBLISHER:	Virgin Interactive	■ DEVELOPER:	In-house
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ AGE RESTRICTIONS:	None
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Football sim

[1] Engineering a Beckham-style free kick is fiendishly tough. [2] One nice touch is that you can make the keepers come for the ball. [3] Press buttons after a goal to do different silly celebrations. [4] Hoofing the ball with the lob button is still worth a pop. [5] Create your own custom tournament. [6] *Viva* favours defenders. [7] Pin-point passing. [8] Make some space.

1

2

3

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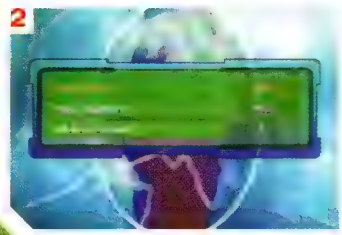
7

8

THEY THINK IT'S... OH DEAR

***Viva*'s big selling point is its History mode that recreates classic matches of the past and world tournaments from specific years with all the correct players. Sadly, a combination of ridiculous goalkeeping and daft refereeing decisions means that England 1966 don't get far.**

1


2

The teams in *Viva* line-dance their way from the '60s to the '90s

D-Pad after you've passed the ball will cause the receiver to race off, usually leaving the ball several yards behind.

The idea behind the control system is that it gives the game depth, but in practice it often frustrates your desire to build up fluid play. If the time-sensitive moves were located on the shoulder buttons or as combinations of presses that would be okay. **Instead, ironically, the pedantic moves ensure that much of the time you're not sure what kind of pass or punt or shot you're going to produce.** Of course, you can learn to make fewer mistakes, but the pace means that even when you know how to pull-off a move it's rare that you have the time to do it. This doesn't sound that serious but, unlike almost any other football game, if you're in the middle of a move the benefit of the doubt usually goes to the defender. You can see a tackler about to wade in, press Pass while he's still yards away and most of the time find yourself scythed down, with the defender having picked the ball off your feet and got away. Add to this PS-controlled defenders who fail to mark anyone and super-soft goalies, and you've got a recipe for conceding far too many rubbish goals.

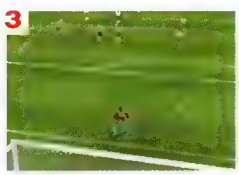
ALL THE OPTIONS AND CLEVER IDEAS IN THE WORLD CAN'T MAKE A GAME GREAT IF THE BASICS AREN'T HANDLED CORRECTLY.

Viva is proof that all the options and clever ideas in the world can't make a game great if the basics aren't handled correctly. There's a lot in *Viva* that's good, but it takes a frustrating amount of time and effort to mine these seams of enjoyment when the fun should start as soon as you pick up the joypad.

Pete Wilton

1

2


3

[1] You can pass in any direction but that can make things difficult. [2] Overhead shenanigans. [3] Goalies: make great saves and miss easy balls.

Alternatively...

ISS Pro	9/10	*PSM36*
Actua Soccer 2	9/10	*PSM27*
FIFA '98	9/10	*PSM40*
FIFA: RTWC '98	8/10	*PSM28*
Viva Football	7/10	*PSM42*

VERDICT

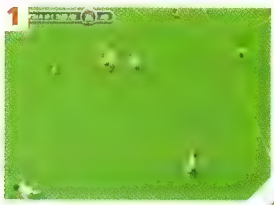
■ GRAPHICS:	Akin to *FIFA* ('96) and *ISS* ('95) *6*
■ GAMEPLAY:	Deep and varied, but extremely fiddly *6*
■ LIFESPAN:	Lots of factual history to re-play *7*

What should be a dream ticket to football heaven ends up a twin-towered disappointment. Bags of history, buckets of nostalgia, but an average kick-about.

7 OUT OF 10

Sensible Soccer: Euro Club Edition

If Stanley Matthews was to return to the Premiership, his old legs would never be able to compete. Welcome to GT's PlayStation equivalent of the grand old man...



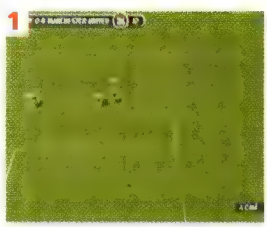
[1] Which could be a shot of the midfield from the Liverpool vs Celta Viga game... [2] That'll be a cut scene then. [3] And the view from the Goodyear blimp shows a goal! Maybe. [4 – 6] Very bright, very open, very spacious, very... Dull.

Sensible Soccer is a game revered by those who remember it. Released for the Amiga over a decade ago, *Sensi* was simply the most addictive game imaginable. True, it was no great shakes to look at with teeny, barely animated sprites running up and down a scrolling pitch and one button used to pass, take corners, shoot or whatever. Yet its simplicity was its beauty, and is also why the game is so fondly remembered. With the advent of this Euro Club Edition for the PlayStation however, the mighty has truly fallen. And we're not talking about the removal of rose-coloured spectacles as an old favourite is revealed to have dated. This is a Wile E Coyote-style long fall from grace that threatens to sully the reputation of the Amiga legend.

Frankly, *Sensible Soccer: Euro Club Edition* is an abomination. Quite why the brains behind this unwarranted conversion thought such a simple game could succeed against the multi-faceted delights of *ISS Pro* and *FIFA '99* is incomprehensible. Fans of the Amiga original will feel the warmth associated with meeting up with a loved one as soon as the game begins. The miniature players are identical to their Commodore compadres and the nostalgic feeling just about lasts until the first thud sound effect as the match kicks off. After that? After that it's downhill all the way.

An appaling Euro-pop dirge opens the game, before a minimal selection of options accounts for the obligatory one and two-player modes and a selection of League and Cup tournaments. The minimalist feel is continued into the main game, as the one-button controls of the Amiga game return. If *Sensible Soccer: Euro Club Edition*

THIS IS A WILE E COYOTE FALL FROM GRACE THAT THREATENS TO SULLY THE REPUTATION OF THE AMIGA CLASSIC...



[1 – 4] One thing guaranteed to bring a tear to the Amiga nostalgist's eye is the sight of the legend they call *Sensi*...

UP TO 2 PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER:	GT	■ DEVELOPER:	Krisalis
■ RELEASE DATE:	January	■ AGE RESTRICTION:	TBA
■ PRICE:	£34.99	■ STYLE:	Footy sim

(1) That'll be the amusing named team (2) "Honest, ref! I never even touched 'im..." (3) Malaysia take on the mighty Sudan in the Four In The Morning On Sky Sports 3 Challenge Cup Final. (4) COME ON THE DERBY!

PASSING IS MESSY AND STILTED AND THE USE OF TINY FIGURES MAKES ACCURATE TACKLING SIMILARLY PROBLEMATIC.

was a straight conversion of the original, GT could be forgiven for its release – preferably as a straight-to-Platinum budget title. Instead, the conversion is a flawed one with fundamental problems nobbling the game before a ball is kicked. The most noticeable fault lies with the scrolling. In these days of *S.C.A.R.S.* and *Micro Machines V3*, it has been proved that the PlayStation can comfortably move a number of objects with ease. Why then do *Sensi* players hug the edge of the screen at times making passing impossible to plot?

That said, passing is as woeful and inaccurate as the shooting, tackling and heading, and is just worsened by the scrolling problems. The distant bird's-eye view used to allow lengthy weighted passes to be made, but all the fluidity that made the original so immediate is conspicuous by its absence. Passing is messy and stilted and the use of tiny figures makes accurate tackling similarly problematic. Basically, EA and Konami's beautifully animated players and control methods have spoiled us – and sadly, *Sensi* is paying for it.

Sensible Soccer is basically an anachronism. Its release is obviously intended to take fans of the original down memory lane to a time when immediacy was everything. Such intentions are negated, though, by an unwieldy and stilted game that removes the key addictive qualities that made the Amiga original so playable. Players may have been willing to put up with the primitive players if *Sensi* was a recognisable cousin of the original. Instead, it is an amateurish conversion that tries to bolster its inadequate gameplay with the odd 3D cut scene. The final insult is an inane commentary which appears to be voiced by one of the Sensible Software team, and adds to the cheapskate feel prevalent throughout the game. If it's a joke, it fails – as does every other aspect of this turgid release.

Steve Merrett

HERE'S ONE WE MADE EARLIER

The only nice touch in *Sensible Soccer* is the ability to load and save custom teams. Teams based on characters from favourite films or even members of the family can be added and saved for later use – thus ensuring much hilarity as Luke Skywalker hits a hat-trick. Chortle.

Alphabet United take on In The Bathroom for The Hilarious Names Cup.

(1 – 2) Who needs *ISS* when you've got this? Um...

Alternatively...

ISS Pro '98	9/10	PSM30
Actua Soccer 2	8/10	PSM27
ISS Pro	9/10	PSM10
World Cup '98	8/10	PSM34
Michael Owen's WLS '99	8/10	PSM47
Actua Soccer 3	8/10	PSM40
Sensible Soccer	2/10	PSM42

VERDICT

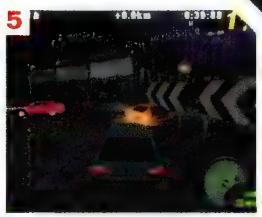
Official UK PlayStation Magazine 42

■ GRAPHICS:	Dated by its origins, and the tagged on 3D bits fail	3
■ GAMEPLAY:	The playability of the Amiga classic is lost	2
■ LIFESPAN:	The Queen Mum will last longer...	2

A dreadful release. The playability of the Amiga game was its strongest aspect and is noticeably absent here. Numerous fundamental flaws heap on more misery.

2 OUT OF 10

[1] For some strange reason the *Max Power* sponsored car is pink. If you can stand the colour it's fast but very lively. [2] Whoops! Someone's taken a tumble. It's all too easy to totally lose it. [3] The replays are put to shame by *Gran Turismo*'s – *Max*'s cars have jaggedy edges. [4] Oddly, despite the rough motors the lighting effects are top. [5] The headlights don't seem to illuminate the road.



Max Power Racing

Jeremy Clarkson would call it "a throbbing Apollo rocket of a game harnessed to the chassis of a shopping trolley". We prefer to call it *Max Power Racing*...

There's something about driving family saloons and hatchbacks stupidly fast around precipitous clifftops that beats caning it down a test track in a Ferrari any day of the week. Well, very nearly. It's that feeling of almost reality – that it could really happen – and of genuine danger what with your Renault Clio or Peugeot 206 having no super carbon brakes, twin-turbo acceleration or roll-cage to look after you. *Max Power Racing* manages to tap into this vein of gung-ho boy racery as effectively as its fore-runner *Total Drivin'* but not without racking up some severe cosmetic damage along the way.

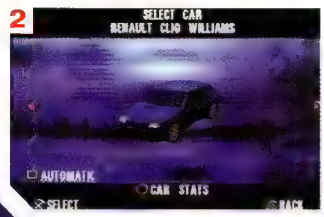
[1] You can tweak the set-up of your car, a good idea in these muddy conditions. [2] Shine a light! Cheers.

We liked *Total Drivin'*. It was a game that failed to impress at first but the more you played it the more you grew to love the subtle handling. *Max Power Racing* takes a similar amount of time to get into, the only problem is that the more its handling grows on you, the more its faults become glaringly obvious.

MAX POWER RACING MANAGES TO TAP INTO THIS VEIN OF GUNG-HO BOY RACERY AS EFFECTIVELY AS ITS FORE-RUNNER *TOTAL DRIVIN'*.

■ PUBLISHER:	Infogrames	■ DEVELOPER:	Eutechnyx
■ RELEASE DATE:	January	■ AGE RESTRICTIONS:	None
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Racing game

(1) Forget where you left your car sir? Bit of a problem in the nightmare streets of Rome. (2) This souped-up Clio is the best drive even if it's ugly as sin. (3) Anything pretty steers like a cow. (4) Nice fog. (5) China crisis. (6) Norway: Good slidey fun.



25 CARS, 20 TUNING OPTIONS, 30 TRACKS AND A SPLIT-SCREEN MODE, NO ONE CAN ACCUSE *MAX POWER* OF LACKING AMBITION.

Featuring 25 cars, 20 tuning options, 30 tracks and a split-screen mode, no one can accuse *Max Power* of lacking ambition. It's obvious that a lot of time has been spent on the tracks as, apart from the usual fast straights and slidy corners, they also boast Eutechnyx's trademark lethal gorges and water hazards. Tumble from a mountain road or stray from the safety of a ford in later sections and your car will sink faster than James Cameron's street cred and your race will be over. This air of realism is carried through to the damage you sustain from prangs and disagreements with roadside obstacles (many of which are destructible) as back windows shatter and body panels buckle. Although a lot of tracks have enjoyable sections to them none stand out as works of genius like *Colin McRae Rally*'s Greece Stage 2 or *Ridge Racer Revolution*'s Intermediate course. It's as if the good corners, fun hazards and ▶

Pose in your big purple pulling mobile by driving round Monaco's outlying suburbs shouting "Oi, nobs, check out the body kit on my wicked wheels".

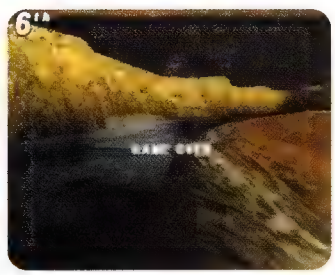
999: TERROR GORGE!

A group of boy racers out for a drive don't notice the perilous edge of the gorge. Several skirt dangerously close before one attempts a powerslide. That was when disaster struck, the car went out of control and tumbled down the slope into the river "I thought I was going to die" Player One told us. As it was he was submerged upside down in the icy water for several long seconds. He was lucky, some racers on later stages didn't escape, their championship cut short by tragedy.

Sight-seeing taken a step too far can end in tragedy as here.

Once you're in the drink there's no chance to escape. Realistic.

You don't need to fall from a great height, just a slide will do.



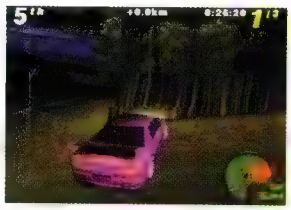
It's only funny when it happens to someone else. What a gutter.

PlayTest

Max Power Racing

WONKEY WHEELS

Everything's going just fine, you're burning off the opposition when suddenly a hedge, fence or wall jumps out at you from nowhere. In most racing games a quick dab of the accelerator and hoik of the steering wheel would get you back on track after losing vital seconds, but Max Power isn't so forgiving. Manoeuvring at low speeds is a nightmare and you can get totally stuck if you're unlucky. The game includes a Replace Car button to get you out of these fixes but it takes away some of the realism and if the tracks and cars were better designed you wouldn't need it.



Don't go smacking into anything head on because when you get stuck it's a right royal pain in the neck to get going again.

IF THE COURSES ARE MEDIOCRE THE CARS ARE A REAL LET-DOWN. MANY APPEARING UNFINISHED, BLOCKY AND BADLY DRAWN.

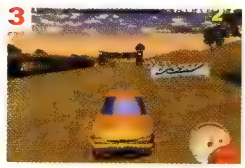
▶ impressive backdrops have been eeked out across 30 okay circuits instead of being concentrated into five or ten tracks to die for.

If the courses are mediocre the cars are a real let-down. Many appear unfinished, blocky and badly drawn, even failing to excite with all the flash camera angles of the replay to make them look good. While expecting *Gran Turismo* build quality is, perhaps, unrealistic sexy driving machines are essential to draw in unsuspecting novices for an automotive thrashing but *Max*'s cars are far too dowdy. If you can bring yourself to pick the pink Max Powermobile or Clio Williams you'll find they're lively and handle well, sliding nicely through chicanes and sailing sideways through the toughest corners. Better still, the grip and performance of each car can be adjusted – letting you fine-tune your motor to the local conditions using the Test Track option.

Yet even here *Max Power Racing* manages to fluff the change of pace as, despite handling well at high speed, at low velocity the cars steer like shopping trolleys. Hit the wall of a bridge end-on and, frustratingly, you can't just nudge your car back on track with accelerate. Thirty seconds of careful reversing and applying full lock will only end one way: you rolling into oblivion and bouncing the joypad off the TV in disgust. Crash-wise too it seems like little has been learned from the automotive gymnastics of *V-Rally* – get an unlucky collision and you tumble all over the shop, often sliding on two wheels with no chance to get decent traction and re-join the circuit, and of course then, when you really need it, the Car Replace option isn't available.

Max Power Racing gets so many important things right that you want it to work. That it doesn't is down to a mountain of small but significant flaws (the lack of a best lap and split times in Time Trial is one of a number of amazing oversights) that wouldn't matter by themselves but that, combined, cripple an otherwise competent speed merchant.

Pete Wilton

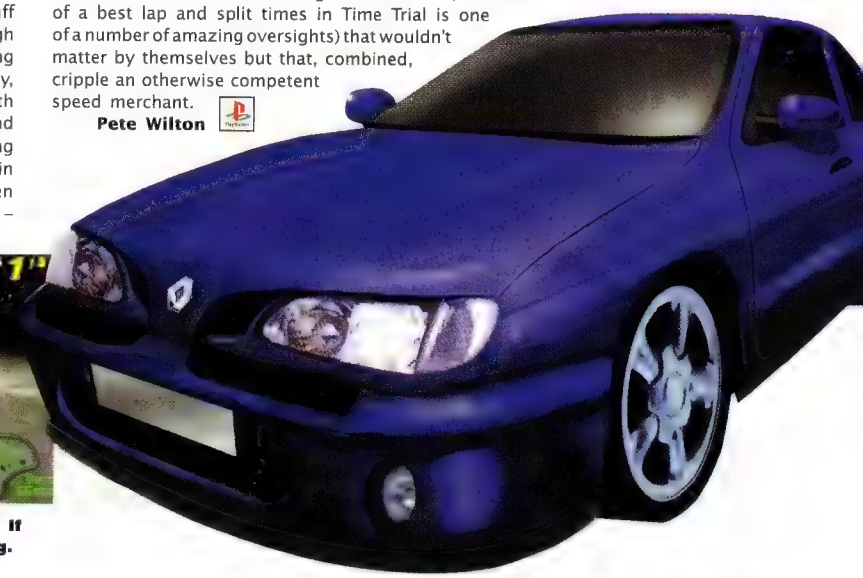


[1] The Time Trials are based on total time not fastest laps. [2] Slide? Nooo! [3] Big end view.

Alternatively...

Gran Turismo	10/10	PSM32
Colin McRae Rally	9/10	PSM35
TOCA	9/10	PSM27
V-Rally	9/10	PSM21
Max Power Racing	7/10	PSM42

[1] Many of the tracks are dullsville. [2] Corrr! Look at the coving on that! If only there were more nice bits of scenery like this Norwegian chapel thing.



VERDICT

GRAPHICS:	Courses good, cars bad	7
GAMEPLAY:	70 per cent enjoyable, 30 per cent infuriating	7
LIFESPAN:	30 courses, but they are all a bit average	7

It feels unfinished and slightly slapdash. Twelve months back that wouldn't matter but in the Golden Age of *Gran Turismo* and *Colin McRae Rally* we demand quality.

7 out of 10

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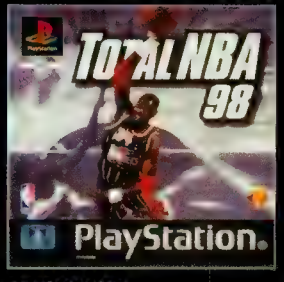

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PlayStation

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UP TO 4 PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | MULTI-TAP COMPATIBLE

(1) Close-up mayhem with the übersweet tussle of madness. (2) Charles Hawtry? Peter Mandelson? Stephen Pierce? You decide. (3) The masons used to look like this, y'know... (4) Meet Chase, Knife, Hurricane and Sharon.

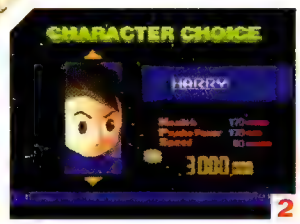
Poy Poy 2

They're teeny, they're diddy, they're homicidal maniacs who hurl rocks at anyone in their immediate vicinity. The *Poy Poy* Clan are back and they're looking for trouble...

Pity poor *Poy Poy*. Well received by the *PSM* team last year – earning a more-than-deserved seven out of ten – it failed to cause a stir at retail level. And that's a damn shame. With a Multi Tap, it's undoubtably one of the best four-player PlayStation titles money can buy, as we so carefully related in last year's PlayTest. But you lot out there almost entirely ignored the game. *Poy Poy 2*, however, gives PlayStation owners a second chance to experience one of the most inventive and enjoyable multiplayer concepts since *Bomberman*.

As an update, it *is* disappointing. In fact, it's more a tweaked version of the original. But that's no bad thing. You see *Poy Poy 2*, like its predecessor, is approachable on two levels. In its basic form, four competitors start on respective corners of an arena. Littered around are a number of items, from exploding rockets to rocks of different sizes. Some objects appear on certain stages only, but the purpose of each remains constant – pick 'em up and throw 'em. If, by chance or skill, they hit an opponent, energy is drained and points awarded. It's a wonderfully simple premise and one that almost anyone can grasp. And with a multiplayer game, that is the most important thing, yes?

PLAYSTATION OWNERS HAVE A SECOND CHANCE TO SEE ONE OF THE MOST INVENTIVE MULTIPLAYER CONCEPTS SINCE *BOMBERMAN*.



(1) "We will fix it/Fix it/Fix it..." The *Poy Poy* boys begin to construct the first pagan temple. (2) "My name is Harry/And I am funky..."

For the solitary player, *Poy Poy*'s cup competition makes a welcome return. Here, players begin with a

VERDICT

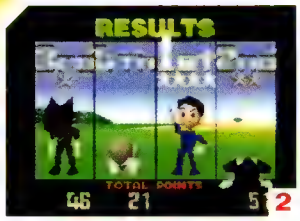
Official UK PlayStation Magazine 42

- GRAPHICS: **Angular, stylised and wonderfully functional 6**
- GAMEPLAY: **A stunning multi-player game 8**
- LIFESPAN: **With one? Nowt. With four? Oodles 8**

"It's my *Poy Poy* and I'll cry if I want to" will be the wail of solitary gamers. Those with loads of pals will croon about how they're mad about the *Poy*...

7 OUT OF 10

■ PUBLISHER:	Konami	■ DEVELOPER:	In-house
■ RELEASE DATE:	Out now	■ AGE RESTRICTION:	None
■ PRICE:	£34.99	■ STYLE:	Chuck 'em up



[1 – 2] They might look cuter than a pixie's puppy, but they're really harder than concrete. *Poy Poy 2* – sadism for sprogs!

modicum of cash and a bog- standard *Poy*-participant. By playing through qualification rounds, though, you can earn extra cash. This can be invested in new gloves, glove enhancements and other abilities. Naturally, it's not as enjoyable as its four-player equivalent – it's not as satisfying to clout a CPU opponent as one of your mates – but it's a thoughtful addition to what is, in essence, a game designed for multiplayer purposes.

There's a strange duality to *Poy Poy 2*. As a one-player game, its remit is to entertain, but rarely to enthral. **As a four-player game, by contrast, it's Multi Tap erotica – as an aprés-pub game, it has few peers.** The purchasing decision is simple: do you regularly gather a gaggle of friends 'round your place for much PlayStation abuse? If so, *Poy Poy 2* really is a game you should buy. For its merits as a group activity, we'd cheerfully award an eight out of ten. As a lonesome button-bashing pursuit, it's rather less engaging. A seven must be a *poy*-ticularly apt conclusion, then. Of course.

DO YOU REGULARLY GATHER A GAGGLE OF FRIENDS 'ROUND YOUR PLACE FOR MUCH PLAYSTATION ABUSE? IF SO, BUY.

James Price

Alternatively...

Poy Poy	7/10	*PSM31*
Poy Poy 2	7/10	*PSM42*
Bomberman World	8/10	*PSM34*

[1] "Leggit! Spike's gone after the picket fence!"

UP TO 4 PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER:	Black Friar	■ DEVELOPER:	Formula Game
■ RELEASE DATE:	Out now	■ AGE RANGE:	None
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Future sports sim

Dodgem Arena

Pop the Cubit on the Anomaly Plinth and don't split your latex trousers... You what? *Dodgem Arena's* not quite that bad. Well, not quite.

1

2

[1] *Wipeout*-esque craft mill about in an effort to ensnare the skimming black discus. Sound like fun? [2] The blue thing ejaculates pucks. Ping.

Visualise a large cannibal's pot. Into it toss Buster Crabbe, a copy of *Wipeout 2097* and a Roman Amphitheatre. Stir, and season with a dash of ice hockey. The resultant repast would be inedible, but – for the sake of humour – would probably play a mean game of *Dodgem Arena*.

This distraction is an amalgamation. A mixture of different things all thrown together and smartly decked out in intergalactic finery. Well it's a futuristic sport. What more do you expect?

The premise is as follows: 'It's AD 2049, superconducting materials and hi-grade, hydrogen fuel have changed the world. Kids everywhere participate in the thrilling sport of dodgem'... And. So. Bloody. On.

Promotional puff stripped away, the actual game is pretty basic. Skim about a rotund coliseum in your hovering craft. Collect a puck from the central point, then transport it to the goal – which constantly revolves around the summit of the stadium. Up against you are three other craft. Such is the essence of *Dodgem Arena*.

At 1000 points/credits/bars of Latinum (whatever they're supposed to be) per goal, scoring is by far the best way to achieve victory. However, other notch carving activities are open to you, which, while not as generous with the tally, are necessary for ultimate glory. We are talking guns. And we are talking missiles. Taking one of these to the tail pipe of a puck-holding adversary, will hammer the point worthy blob from his metallic grasp, and prod some points your way too. Other electronic baggage for the pilfering includes a grappler – good for dragging a stray puck to your vessel; a battery – for a mouthful of energy; a boost – an attack of the sprints; and autopilot – which whips you straight to goal.

Beneficial ephemera aside, the gameplay is savagely limited. Win an engagement and it's onto the next, only with one less puck. Rivetting, it's not. Even on two-player (with an option for four on link-up) the title fails to incite much enthusiasm. Perhaps it is the inherent fictionalisation of a 'sport'. Or maybe it's the arbitrary nature of acquiring the black stone. It's a pity, as *Dodgem Arena* is a tastily presented, fast moving slice of hokum, with intuitive, fast reacting control. Still, if developers must dabble with cosmonautical sport they should expect to get their fingers burnt. By a plasma cricket bat perhaps...

Stephen Pierce

3

1

2

[1] Choose your land speeder first. They differ in speed, strength and looks. Slightly. [2] The coloured circles indicate where the goal, the pucks and your opponents are. [3] It nips along at quite a pace, but is that enough?

Alternatively...

Wipeout 2097	9/10	*PSM12*
Dodgem Arena	6/10	*PSM42*
Streak	6/10	*PSM10*
Dead Ball Zone	6/10	*PSM33*

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	The fizz, bang, splip of cyber sport	7
■ GAMEPLAY:	Handles nicely, but tears of tedium begin to well	5
■ LIFESPAN:	You might click with the two-player for a while	6

It's a sexy enough eye bath, but the actual game mechanics soon begin to lose any original novelty. Obsessive Wamp Rat hunters only need apply.

6 out of 10

HELEN SHARMAN STEPHEN BAXTER PATRICK MOORE JOHN GRIBBIN

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ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | MOUSE COMPATIBLE

[1] All the fun of team tweaks is packed within. [2] The match replays are surprisingly gripping. [3 – 4] Enough facts and figures for you?

Player Manager Season 98-99

Premier Manager '98 has been on top of the table since its release.

Can a plucky _Player Manager_ knock it off?

Let's establish something up-front. *Player Manager 98-99* is a decent football management game (anybody clever enough to have already sensed a 'but' looming at some point in the next few paragraphs can award themselves a sweet now). It has all the classic ingredients of the heady cocktail that is football management. You can play as any team from the English or Scottish leagues. You can buy and sell players, from foreign star names to complete unknowns. There are lists of statistics to do with a player's ability to pass, shoot, react quickly, be in the right place at the right time and a whole host of other skills, all present in satisfyingly large numbers. You can bring on callow youths and turn them into stars. You can even get involved in limited stadium development.

Tactically, this is a sound game. At its heart is a Tactics Designer that allows for pretty much any

TACTICALLY THIS IS A SOUND GAME. AT ITS HEART IS A TACTICS DESIGNER THAT ALLOWS FOR PRETTY MUCH ANY FORMATION...

[1] Forest looking more than a bit dodgy there so... [2] So time to tighten things up with *Player Manager*'s Tactics Designer. Not sure about the choice of libero though. [3] A somewhat unlikely scoreline for the boys in blue.

■ PUBLISHER:	**Infogrames**	■ DEVELOPER:	**Funsoft**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**February**	■ AGE RESTRICTIONS:	**None**
■ PRICE:	**£39.99**	■ STYLE:	**Footy management sim**

[1] Forest soak up pressure from a suitably-rotated Chelsea. [2] Thank Hod for the Transfer Market option. This lot are bobbins. [3] Within such murkiness lies many a sweeper formation.

formation and combination of playing styles you can imagine, from the commonplace Christmas-tree and wing-backs, to the more esoteric libero and sweeper. All are customisable too, enabling you to put any player in any position on the pitch and give him instructions on where to make runs and who to pass to. Best of all, this Tactics Designer makes you assess the capabilities of each of your players and build a team around their talents, dipping into the transfer market to fill the gaps as necessary. This aspect of the game is consuming and will require a fair amount of patience and skill before you start getting the results you want. It requires you to balance the abilities of the players you have with the ambition to play good football. It is, in short, both challenging and rewarding and is certainly to be applauded.

To help you make progress in defining your team's style, there are three separate options for watching a match. The first is a full-blown graphical treat (which looks like *FIFA* or *Actua Soccer*) and which, unlike the cut-down version of *Actua* present in *Premier Manager '98*, reflects accurately the calculations of the game engine behind it, so that when you see a player make a pass you know that the game has actually calculated that he has done so. This lets you watch players as a proper manager would do and is, to our knowledge, a breakthrough in football management games. You can see when a player's off form and making bad passes and, conversely, you can tell when someone's performing well. This sort of thing has been done before in a very crude manner, but has never been matched so successfully to a decent graphics engine that makes the game so exciting to watch. For this too, *Player Manager* is to be applauded.

The other two ways of watching a match are less inspiring, but equally useful in their own way. The Highlights option shows you the same match from an overhead, tactical display. This lets you get right inside the tactical engine of the game by enabling you to replay actions step-by-step, so you can freeze an attack as it breaks down for example and see who's out of ▶

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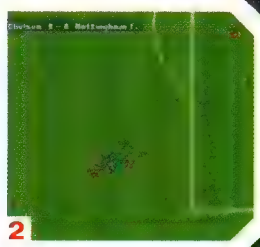
Player Manager 98-99

[1] Will you look at the size of that squad... [2] An All-stars team to take on the best. Not sure about David James in goal. [3] Shades of Wembley '77.

YOU CAN FREEZE AN ATTACK AS IT BREAKS DOWN AND SEE WHO'S OUT OF POSITION, OR WHERE THE PASSING WENT WRONG.

▶ position, or where the passing went wrong. You can also track players and watch where they're running to, enabling you to make changes to your tactics. The third option is a simple Commentary mode that prints up an occasional description of what's happening on the pitch – this is the option to choose when you want to get through games in a hurry.

All in all, *Player Manager* is a great game (wait for it, wait for it), *but* there are two things that will probably annoy you about it. The first is the interface. What we have here is a classic PC game interface with drop-down menus and lots of point 'n' click buttons. Fine, if you're the proud owner of a PlayStation mouse but upsetting and perplexing if you're not. There have been efforts to speed up your selections but once again the game relies on the movement of an on-screen pointer to make your choices rather than direct button access. The shortcuts in place are a help but often remembering that there is a shortcut occurs just as you finish doing the task the long way. This inconvenience is however a necessary evil. Such a sizey and complex beast demands a sizey and complex control method.



[1] Visual overload! [2] *Visual overload!* [3] VISUAL OVERLOAD!

The second problem is similarly a by-product of the complexity of the game. During the frequent result calculations your PlayStation's processor is force-fed a diet of facts and figures far in excess of any task it has had to perform yet. Hardcore maths is not its strong point and yet that's exactly what it's being forced to do. The result for the player is plenty of sitting around while the game updates its virtual world of football and every facet of everything in it. And do you really want to know the result of every match in every division anyway? In its pursuit of footy realism *Player Manager* seems to have inadvertently bogged itself down in a torrent of unnecessary facts and figures.

However, this is, at present the most thorough and in-depth football management game around and it is to be commended for its heavyweight, hardcore fan-pleasing approach. If you were disappointed by the shallowness of *Premier Manager '98* then this is the facts 'n' figures behemoth for you.

Whether *Premier Manager '99* can compete by combining similar depth while being easier to play will be revealed in its review next month.

Daniel Griffiths

Alternatively...

Player Manager 98-99 8/10 *PSM42*

Premier Manager '98 7/10 *PSM33*

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	Rather plain and average throughout 6	A thoroughly enjoyable game that'll please stat fans everywhere. But if the prospect of wading through a squillion menus scares you witless then forget it.
■ GAMEPLAY:	Excellent, but very slow at the start 7	
■ LIFESPAN:	Simply infinite 9	

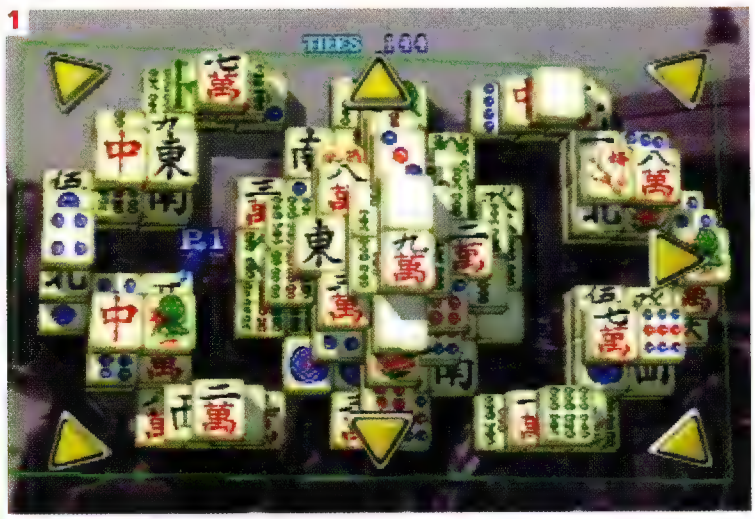
8 out of 10

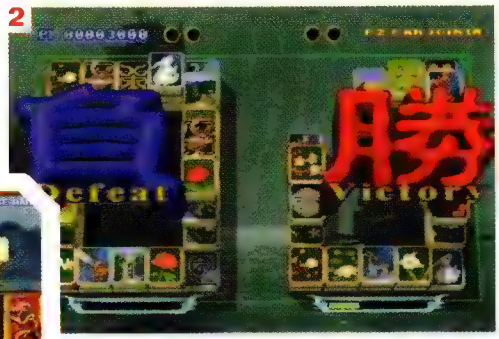
UP TO 2 PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | MOUSE COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER:	Sunsoft	■ DEVELOPER:	Activision
■ RELEASE DATE:	February	■ AGE RANGE:	None
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Oriental puzzler

Shanghai True Valor

Another aging classic finally makes its way to the PlayStation – but is it too little, too late?





[1] In the Classic Mode you can move the view to see partially hidden tiles. [2] Beating the computer in Vs Mode is tricky. [3] The Arcade game offers three games to choose from [4 – 5] Battle Mode has several attack moves.

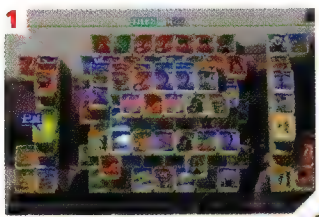
Shanghai is one of those games that seems to have been around forever. Over the years versions have appeared on almost every console, and now it's the PlayStation's turn. Fundamentally *Shanghai* is an incredibly simple game. Patterned tiles are laid out on the screen and your objective is to remove them all by finding matching pairs of designs. To make things a little more complicated, the tiles are arranged in layers and you can't remove a tile that's covered by another. Similarly, you can't remove a tile that is boxed in.

This might not sound like the most exciting game you've ever played – and to be honest, it isn't adrenaline-fuelled. However, the sheer simplicity of the concept makes it strangely compelling – it has much the same indefinable appeal as patience or solitaire and somehow it can quickly eat up hours of your life.

The simple nature of the basic game also makes it easy to come up with dozens of variations, and it has more than enough to keep you amused. As well as Classic Shanghai, there's Rolling Shanghai, in which the tiles are distributed on four sides of a rotating cube, and even Battle Shanghai, a kind of puzzle game beat 'em up, similar in some ways to *Bust-A-Move* or two-player *Tetris*. On top of that, all the games can be played in Arcade mode, where time limits add a little tension to the proceedings.

Shanghai True Valor is a curious little beast. If it grabs you, it's just as addictive as any of the previous versions of *Shanghai*, and the Battle mode in particular is surprisingly good fun. On the other hand, the graphics are a little unclear at times and moving your cursor around the board is frustratingly slow. If this kind of game appeals, it will amuse you for hours – but you'd probably be better off with one of the versions of *Bust-A-Move* or possibly *Mah Jongg* on this month's demo. Suddenly, £39.99 doesn't seem such a good deal...

Andy Butcher



[1] If you've played Mah Jongg, Shanghai will be very familiar. [2] Battle Mode lets you pick a character to play.

Alternatively...

Bust-A-Move 3	9/10	*PSM31*
Super Puzzle Fighter	9/10	*PSM20*
Shanghai True Valor	6/10	*PSM42*
Bust-A-Move 4	8/10	*PSM40*
Lemmings 3D	8/10	*PSM1*
Devil Dice	7/10	*PSM41*

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	Fairly basic and not always very clear 6
■ GAMEPLAY:	Extremely simple, but can be extremely addictive 6
■ LIFESPAN:	If it hooks you, you'll keep coming back for more 7

A solid and nicely varied version of the classic game, but not without some serious competition from other – dare we say – better PlayStation puzzlers.

6 out of 10

The videogame magazine

Arcade

You've got a PlayStation, right? It's the world's favourite games machine, so you're in good company. But there's much more out there. There's Nintendo 64, Game Boy, coin-ops and a whole world of PC games. *Arcade* covers it all. You should to.

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Sega's Dreamcast is here to kick ass.

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Plus, in the third issue of *Arcade*:

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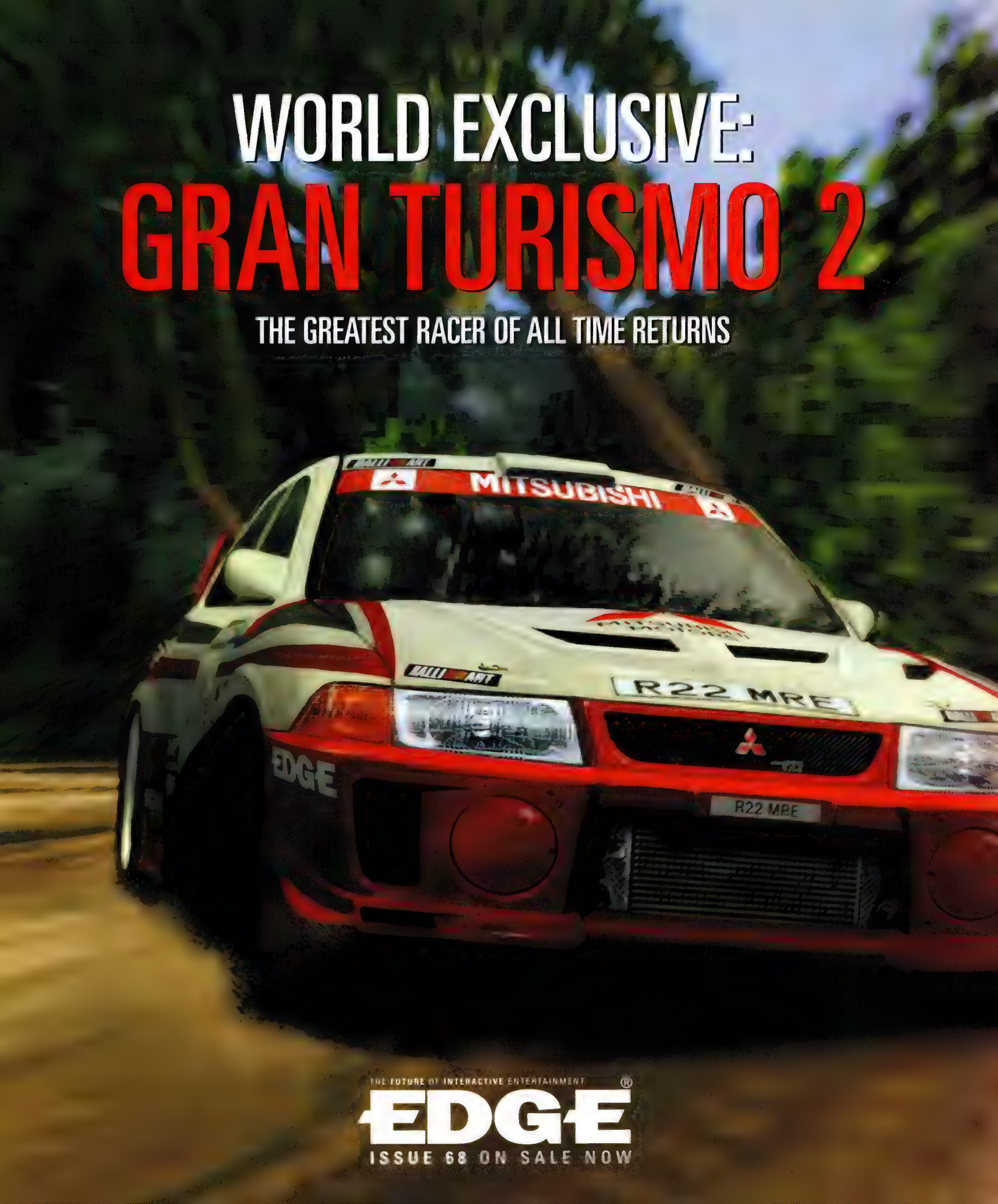
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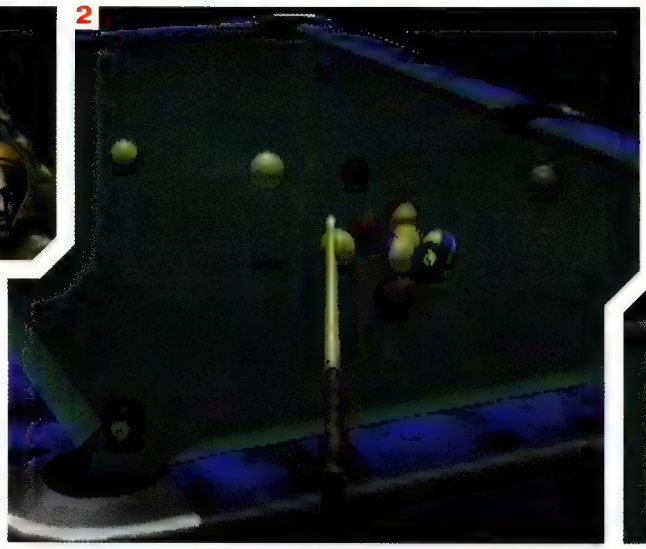
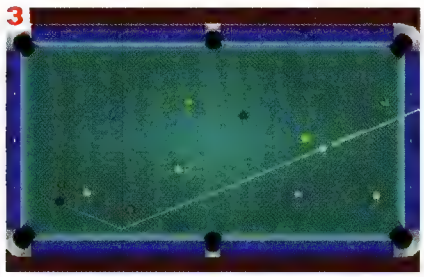
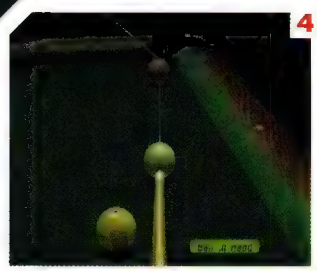
■ PUBLISHER:	Sunsoft	■ DEVELOPER:	ASK
■ RELEASE DATE:	Out now	■ AGE RESTRICTIONS:	None
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Pool sim

UP TO 2 PLAYERS

MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE







[1] Crunch time. Do you dare wage money with the magical Rasta? [2] "My hands! My hands! Where have they gone?" [3] A bird's eye view. You don't want to play that shot, sir. [4] Up close and personal. Don't dare miss that pot. [5] The game of kings! And, more importantly, drunkards!

Pool Hustler

Forget bloody gladiatorial combat, sickening war or even (shudder) conkers. Pool is where it's at.

On any given night of the week, a studied trawl through the country's less salubrious intoxication parlours will reveal gaggles of steaming punters stooped over a low-lit baize table, engaged in manly struggles over piffling portions of their hard-earned wages. And why? As a test of skill, perhaps. Or the sinful pull of sparkling monies. Whatever, the game they play is as old as time and remains the yardstick by which a man succeeds or fails. It is, simply, pool: the great leveller. (Some may legitimately claim that great leveller to be Death, a game at which nobody can win.)

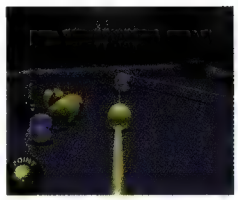
Anyway, along comes *Pool Hustler*, allowing Men To Be Men from the comfort of their own office and give their livers a slight reprieve. And, for a £40 simulation of something you can essentially play for 50p, replete with companionship and brown liquors, it's not bad.

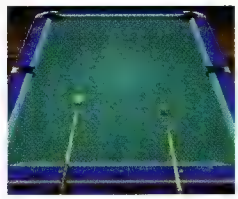
Any pool game lives or dies by its physics – if the balls don't roll as they would in real life, then the whole thing's going to be a waste of time and money. *Pool Hustler's* green-baize action hits the spot, gliding over the felt with a feeling that's just so. The balls bounce, spin and click off each other with just the right amount of 'feel.' The fundamentals are catered for commendably and the manually manipulable camera, although basic, works just fine when it comes to lining up shots.

The most fun you'll have with *Pool Hustler* is playing with a friend, despite the single-player games' brave attempts to fashion a story-cum-championship from the humble combination of cue and ball. Starting out playing in greasy dives, the aim is to bet on games, hopefully win them and accrue enough money to play greater and more professional opponents. Wagers can be placed on single shots, too, which adds interest and tension. The laughable opponents, though, with their limited text-box responses ("You're a gutless wonder, dude") are simply risible in execution.

But still, This is a competent approximation of a very enjoyable pastime, and one that's worth taking a look at if you really must have a pool sim. But for all that *Pool Hustler* gets right, it simply doesn't offer the variety that Gremlin's *Pool Shark* does. And there's no Killer Play mode. Which is a shame.

Jes Bickham





The simple act of hitting balls into holes with other balls is the ultimate act of skill. Yes.

Alternatively...

Pool Shark	8/10	*PSM40*
Virtual Pool	8/10	*PSM16*
Pool Hustler	6/10	*PSM41*

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	On the wrong side of mediocre, but effective 5
■ GAMEPLAY:	Enjoyably close resemblance to the real thing 6
■ LIFESPAN:	Um, depends if you like pool really 6

Pool Hustler **pushes all the right buttons in its quest to *be* pool, but ultimately lacks variety and the diversity of options necessary for out-and-out PlayStation fun.**

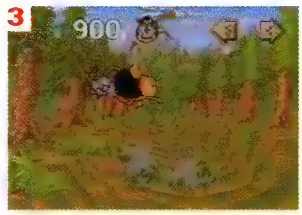
6 out of 10

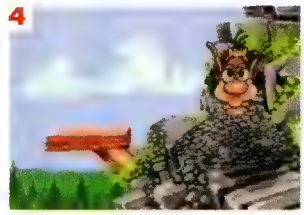
ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE

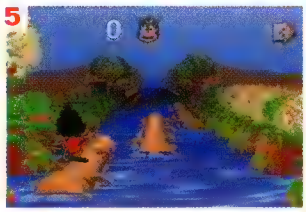
■ PUBLISHER:	ITE Media	■ DEVELOPER:	In-house
■ RELEASE DATE:	Out now	■ AGE RESTRICTIONS:	None
■ PRICE:	£34.99	■ STYLE:	Children's adventure

Hugo

Razor blades under fingernails. The thumbscrews. The Iron Maiden. Step aside, there's a new boy in town.







[1] "Hello, I'm Hugo, feel free to hate me." [2] Rickety cart driving – welcome to the exciting world of videogames. [3] Avoid rocks by pressing the left button and then the right button. [4] Absolute... [5] rubb.. [6] ..ish.

When a mono-toothed, betailed midget in green dungarees grins his way onto your TV, you know you're in deep trouble. Billed thus – 'based on the famous game-show character'- this archaic squirt of digital excreta appears to have been sanctioned by no less than the Devil himself. It was in fact ITE Media. Who? Well exactly.

Taking control of the eponymous grotesque, it becomes apparent that the idea is to guide *it* through seven or so levels, each different, each overflowing with boredom. Fly plane – press left and right – collect fuel to stay aloft. Jump logs – press left and right – get gold. If this sounds overly simplistic, then good. Because it is. Yes, it's disarmingly tedious. Yes, you would rather eat your own genitalia than play it.

The other levels incorporate hellacious representations of skateboarding, swimming, climbing a mountain and some other stuff involving sterling, single press, D-Pad ennui. After five minutes you've tried all, hated all and want to stuff all in a furnace.

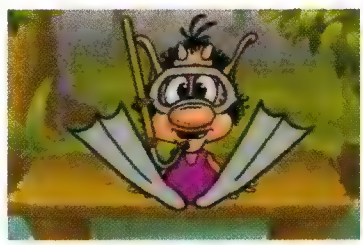
And so it goes. It's the awe-inspiring simplicity of the thing, the monotony, it's inherent basicness, that will stamp your soul into bloody juice after mere minutes.

Let's examine the rest of the evidence. Hugo's trial is apparently to sabotage a plot by the evil (yawn) Sculla which entails trying to steal beauty and youth from Hugo's missus. And her name? Hugolina – do you see what they did there? Of course this rudimentary narrative informs the plot not one iota. **After sitting through dishevelled cut-scenes and twiddling your bits during loading times, it's back to basics. Jump or duck. Up or down. Play or bin?**

True, there is an arcade version which ups the toughness ante somewhat. And more importantly, it *has* genuinely been designed with the less mature gamer in mind. But if this purports to be computer edutainment, then it would be better employed teaching meths-addled tramps the meaning of left and right. One suspects even the most juvenile PlayStation virgin would swiftly question the validity of this pish.

With easy to pick up, well presented, fun titles like *Lucky Luke*, the *Crash* series and *Spyro* on the market, this effluent deserves no home. It's the gaming equivalent of *Michael Flatley's Feet Of Flames* video. Embarrassing, agonising and misguidedly under the impression that it qualifies as entertainment.

Stephen Pierce



The underwater section: vibrant and hugely gripping. Sorry, dozed off there.

Alternatively...

Crash Bandicoot 3	9/10	*PSM40*
Spyro The Dragon	8/10	*PSM39*
Lucky Luke	6/10	*PSM33*
Hugo	2/10	*PSM42*

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	Big, bold, colourful – like Pat Butcher 3
■ GAMEPLAY:	If there is a place beyond boring, it's here 1
■ LIFESPAN:	Four minutes and 48 seconds 1

Devilishly toss. An outside latrine of a game which should never be visited. Hold it in and frequent a premier commode like *Spyro*.

2 OUT OF 10

TOP SECRET

CONTENTS

in association with MEGASTORES

TRUST UNCLE *PSM* WHEN HE SAYS THAT THESE LOVELY TIPS WILL RENDER ALL YOUR CHRIMBO PRESSIES COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY USELESS. WHY YOU'RE WELCOME, ME DEARIES...

116 POWERLINE

Call Sony's Powerline on 0881 505 505 or if you are in the Republic of Ireland call Powerline on 1550 131415

117 POWERLINE TIPS

Watch in awe as thanks to the power of Powerline, we give cheats galore for *Tenchu, Abe's Exoddus, Cool Boarders 3, Tomb Raider 3, S.C.A.R.S.* and *Shadow Gunner.*

118 TOCA 2: TOURING CARS

Our Codemasters-approved guide to Donington, Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Oulton Park, Knockhill, Croft, Snetterton, Thruxton PLUS! a few sneakily-hidden tracks...

124 CRASH BANDICOOT 3

The PlayStation's coolest platformer is laid bare as we reveal how to beat the boxes, collect the gems, access the secret levels and generally kick the hell out of Cortex fella.

TOP SECRET

Official UK PlayStation®

POWERLINE

***PSM* HAS GOT TOGETHER WITH THE OFFICIAL SONY POWERLINE SERVICE TO BRING YOU THE LATEST CHEATS STRAIGHT FROM THE BRAIN AT SONY.**

The official PlayStation Powerline is a unique service holding a wealth of immediate gaming advice, available at the touch of a button. The Powerline receives, on average, 10,000 calls every single week and currently dishes out tips on over 300 games. A number which is ever-swelling due to the regular addition of the latest tips for the latest releases.

We'll be featuring the newest additions to the Powerline each month along with classic cheats and readers' requests (so write to Top Secret at the usual address). Can't see the cheat you want here? Give the line a try. Just call the number below and once connected press 0 to go to the game menu. Now just key in the five figure code printed top left on every game disc (and featured alongside the cheats below). If there are any tips and cheats for that game you'll hear them, so have a pen and some paper ready. As they say.

Alternatively, phone the Powerline and wait to hear the current range of other options including the latest release schedule. Just press the button required. What could be easier?

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Service provided by Telecom Potential, PO Box 66, BS21 7QX

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POWERLINE TBA

TOMB RAIDER 3

Enter these codes *during* play. Don't pause the game and then enter them! When a code reads L2 x4, for example, press L2 four times.

Level skip
L2, R2, L2 x2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2 x4, R2, L2, R2 x4, L2

If you've entered this correctly you'll hear Lara say 'No,' the screen will freeze and resume at the end of level statistics screen.

All weapons
L2, R2 x2, L2 x4, R2, L2, R2 x2, L2, R2 x2, L2 x2, R2, L2 x2, R2

If you've entered this correctly you'll hear Lara scream. You should now have all of the weapons and ammo, save crystals and medipacks.

All keys and secrets
L2 x5, R2, L2

Chick-boy japes unlocked, making murdering fun mucho more easy.

x3, R2, L2, R2, L2 x2, R2, L2 x2, R2, L2 x2

If you have entered this correctly you'll hear Lara sigh. This cheat not only gives you every key but eight secrets as well.

Top up health
R2 x2, L2, R2, L2 x6, R2, L2 x3, L2, L2 x5

Fills Lara's health bar to maximum.

Racetrack key
R2, L2 x3, R2, L2 x6, R2, L2 x5, R2, L2 x2

Gives you the key to the racetrack in the Lara's Mansion section of the game.

POWERLINE 01480

ABE'S EXODDUS

To show all in-game movies
Hold the R1 button on the main menu and enter the following:
↑, ↓, ←, →, □, ○, △, ○, □, ○, ↑, ↓, ←, →

To gain access to all levels
Hold down the R1 button on the main menu screen and enter the following:
↓, ↑, ←, →, △, □, ○, △, □, ○, ↓, ↑, ←, →

Invulnerability
Hold the R1 button whilst in-game and enter the following:
○, △, □, ⊗, ↓, ↓, ↓, ○, △, □, ⊗

Jump to the next continue point
Hold the R1 button whilst in-game and enter the following: ○, ○, ⊗, ⊗, □, □

POWERLINE 01374

TENCHU

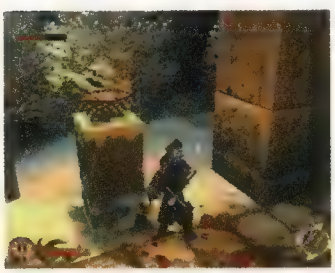
Carrying capacity of 99 items
Whilst holding down the R2 button on the Items select screen, press:
□, □, △, △, →, →, ↑, ↓

Secret items
Whilst holding down the R1 button on the Items select screen, press:
□, □, △, △, →, →, ↑, ←

Increase the number of items you have
Whilst holding down the L2 button on the 'Items' select screen, press:
□, □, △, △, →, →, ↑, →

Choose your mission
While holding down the R1 button on the Mission select screen, press the following buttons □, □, △, △, →, →, ↑, →

Restore health to maximum
Whilst in-game, press SELECT and enter the following: □, □, △, △, →, →, ↑, ←



Sneaky sneaky, cutty head offy. Cutlery and pain-based laughs.

POWERLINE 01615

COOL BOARDERS 3

Enter the following cheats on the Tournament name screen. A sound confirms correct entry of the cheat.

To gain access to all the boards, enter: **O, P, E, N,** space, **E, M**
To open all the courses, enter: **W, O, N, I, T, A, L, L**
For Big Head mode enter: **B, I, G, H, E, A, D, S**

POWERLINE TBA

S.C.A.R.S.

Enter these as passwords, selected from the options menu:
GLASSX : Crystal cup
ROCKYY : Diamond cup
ZDPEAK : Zenith cup
XPERTS : MASTER mode – compete with all hidden cars
DESERT : Scorpion car
RATTLE : Cobra car
RUNNER : Cheetah car
MYSTER : Panther car
ALLVID : All codes

POWERLINE TBA

CRASH BANDICOOT 3

Access the hidden *Spyro* demo
On the Start screen press the following buttons
↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ←, →, ↙

POWERLINE TBA

SHADOW GUNNER

To access the cheat code screen hold down select on the main menu screen and press △ three times, very quickly.

Then enter one of these codes:
Invincibility: △, ○, ○, △, ○, □, ⊗, ⊗

Invisibility: □, △, ⊗, □, △, ○, ⊗, △

Super gun: ⊗, ○, △, ⊗, ⊗, ○, ⊗, □

"Eeeuuuww, fakieee." Rubbish, of course, but the game's rad! Oops.

Top down view: △, △, ⊗, ⊗, □, ○, □, ⊗

Level select: □, ⊗, □, △, ⊗, △, ○, □

The Level Select cheat allows you to choose different missions on the mission intro screen. Start a new game, then on the mission intro screen, hold down select and use ← and → to select the mission.

POWERLINE TBA

ROGUE TRIP

Enter the following as passwords:
Funtopia level
⊗, ○, R2, ⊗, □, L1

Gulch level
⊗, □, ○, L1, L2, □

Boss battle 1
○, R2, R1, □, L1, R2

Boss battle 2
○, ○, L2, L1, △, △

Big Daddy boss battle
□, △, ○, ○, R2, R2

Alien saucer
R1, □, ⊗, □, L2, ○

Play as Goliath
△, L1, R1, ⊗, L2, L2

Play as Nightshade
R1, R2, L1, L1, ⊗, ○

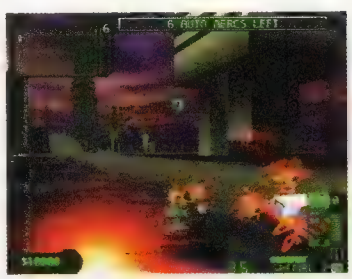
Play as Helicopter
L1, △, R2, △, △, R1

Double pick-ups
L1, L2, ○, L1, R1, □

Increased armour
R1, △, R1, △, L1, □

Unlimited jumps
○, □, R2, ⊗, △, R2

Duke Nukem FMV sequence
□, □, ○, ○, △, △



The most roguish of trips. Harass tourists with your lunatic motor.

TOP SECRET

PLAYING *TOCA 2: TOURING CARS* IS AS CLOSE TO RACING A PUKKA BTCC CAR AS YOU CAN GET WITHOUT STEALING ONE. AND THEY HAVE TO BE DRIVEN LIKE A REAL ONE TOO. SO HERE'S TEN TIPS TO KEEP ON TRACK...

TOCA 2: TOURING CARS

THE TEN TRACK COMMANDMENTS

❶ LEARN THE TRACKS
Practise in Single Race mode if you have to. To achieve the best lap times you need to learn each track well, which takes plenty of practise.

❷ LEARN THE CARS
All the cars handle slightly differently, so find which ones suit your driving style and learn them. Renaults and Nissans are good all-rounders.

❸ DRIVE WELL
Getting a good qualifying time is very important in later and harder stages. Don't mess up. You only get one lap. Even when you know you are heading for a good lap time or are well ahead of the pack, don't let up. Keep the gas on and increase your lead.

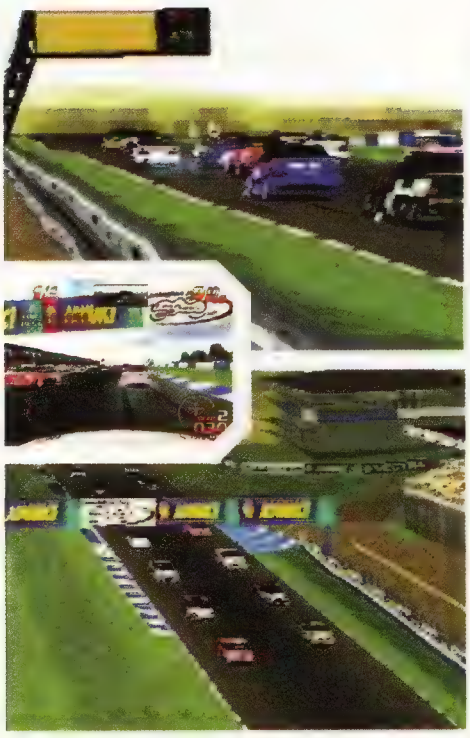
❹ PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR CAR SET-UP
This can have a significant influence on your performance on the different tracks. At Thruxton for example you need to maximise your sixth gear for the best top speed down straights, but at Brands Hatch the default gear set-up is fine.

❺ DON'T RUSH IT, USE YOUR BRAKES
The most important advice for a new driver is to use the brakes. This might seem obvious to the normal road-user, but piling into corners at top speed may often result in spinning out or crashing. Keep the car steady down the straights, brake down to the cornering speed before you start to turn, turn smoothly into the corner and then accelerate out.

❻ TAKE THE INSIDE
If you are approaching a corner in a pack of cars, take the inside racing line and use the other cars to guide you round the corner. Touring cars are very twitchy, you must learn to take the corners at the appropriate speed. The Time Trial option is specifically designed for this, allowing you to gradually perfect your corners as you get faster and faster times.

❼ WORK OUT SHORT-CUTS FOR TRACKS
Some tracks have useful little short-cuts you can use to avoid nasty chicanes and corners.

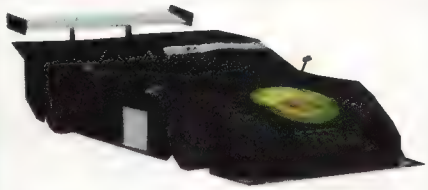
❽ PAY ATTENTION TO THE PIT CREW
Some of the pit crew's speech is very informative and useful. Driving into the pit lane when your team-mate is already there is bound to be a waste of time.



⑨ GET A WHEEL
Analogue acceleration and braking is a big advantage in the wet, especially on support cars. Invest in a Steering Wheel and pedals – this is how you should play racing games, and gives the most realistic playing experience.

⑩ KEEP OFF THE GRASS
Stick to the track and take the best racing line – going off-track can be very detrimental to your car's performance and handling capabilities. Preventing spins is another very important aspect of the game. If you feel the car starting to slide, reduce your acceleration and gently steer back onto line. If you end up on the grass, stay in a straight line until you get back onto the Tarmac. Turning sharply on grass is a recipe for disaster and a sure way of losing valuable time.

SUPPORT RACES



All the cars in the game have their own unique properties. To discover your favourite car, try driving a couple of laps around Donington in each car and see which one you prefer. We recommend the Honda, Renault, Audi or Volvo as these four cars have a little more power than the others.

When choosing a support car, it's important to realise that, true to life, they handle quite differently from the touring cars.

■ **THE FIESTA** can be driven just like the TOCA touring cars, but is slower.

■ **THE VAN DIEMEN** needs attention to prevent oversteer and you should avoid collisions at all costs.

■ **THE LISTER, AC, TVR AND JAGUAR** need a complete change in driving style.

While driving the **TOCA CARS** you can leave braking till 75-50m and keep on the brakes round the corner, the support cars require you to brake at about 100m (150m for Jag) and finish your de-acceleration before you enter the corner.

You apply the gas gently after hitting the inside apex of most corners but be very sparing with the throttle, especially in the Lister or you'll swap ends. There are some hairpin bends that let the AC, Jag and TVR give plenty of power oversteer on the exit, which can be fun.

The Scorpion basically drives like a more nervous version of the Van Diemen.
All the RWD cars need great respect in the wet, especially the AC as you can't increase downforce at all. Again, choose a car and then play around with it; experimentation is key when evaluating a car's performance.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

■ Enter these code names as your driver's name to see the following special effects.

CODE	EFFECT
MINICARS	Micro Machines-style camera view
PADDED	Bouncy barriers
LUNAR	Low gravity
LONGLONG	Propeller-head championship
PUNCHY	No kickout of champ.
BANGBANG	Battle mode
TECHLOCK	Lock frame-rate during qualification
BCASTLE	Bouncy crashes
DUBBED	OTT crashes
ELASTIC	Stretch track vertically
TRIPPY	Blur horizons
JUSTFEET	Wheels only (no car body)
FASTBOY	Faster
DINKYBIT	Oulton Park island circuit

The powerslide is a great skill to have in *TOCA 2*.

TEST TRACK

TOCA 2 features an exciting test track, enabling you to give your chosen car some welly on a variety of surfaces. One of the best uses of the Test Track is to experiment with the car setup – accessed via the pause menu – and re-enter the track at the point you left it, providing you with a more direct and easily accessible comparison.

Another option includes a slippery dirt track, useful for practising controlling slides.

TOP SECRET

DONINGTON GP

■ **HEADING DOWN THE MAIN STRAIGHT** for the right-hander Redgate, you should be sitting on the left-hand side of the track for better corner entry. Brake early and turn in late in order to clip the rumble strip on the right-hand side and accelerate out.

■ **PAST THE GENTLE HOLLYWOOD** right-hander is the Craner Curves, which needs to be taken fast and smoothly, without braking.

■ **SLOW DOWN EARLY** for the old hairpin, a sharp right-hander, where you need to turn in early.

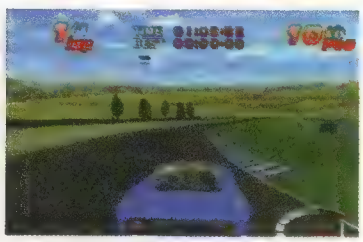
■ **UNDER THE BRIDGE** and past some fairly easy curves is the McLeans corner, which turns sharply to the right. This turn is vital – too slow and you'll lose time, but too fast and you'll spin into the gravel trap.

■ **THE NEXT RIGHT-HANDER,** Coppice is fairly easy and then it's fast down the straight, moving over to the right before braking hard and driving smoothly through the S-bends.

■ **BRAKING IS VERY IMPORTANT** for the S-bends. Brake sooner rather than later, trying to avoid locking the brakes. Take a left line being careful not to hit the computer cars that brake early, and brake, before turning sharply and accelerating towards the final hairpin, Goddards. Brake late and hard, turning in late to cut across the apex before accelerating out to start the next lap.

DONINGTON SHORTS

■ **FOLLOW THE ADVICE GIVEN** for Donington GP, but remember to stay on the left after the Coppice turn, ready for the final chicane. Brake early, turn late and accelerate out, clipping the apex before drifting over the right to start another lap.



Practice is all that makes perfect – or as near as you're ever going to get.

BRANDS HATCH

■ **THE SHORTEST AND BUMPIEST** of the tracks, with banked and off-camber sections, Brands Hatch needs to be driven with care.

■ **THE FIRST RIGHT-HANDER,** Paddock Hill bend drops away and you need to get your line just right, braking late, heading for the right corner apex and then flooring it on the exit, getting the power down as quick as possible.

■ **MOVE SLOWLY OVER TO THE LEFT** under the bridge, brake easily for a 180 degree hairpin turn at Druids, turn in smoothly, accelerate slightly until you're past the apex and then power out again.

■ **TRY TO STAY ON THE RIGHT** for the entry to the next left-hander, Graham Hill, moving over to the left to clip the apex, flat out if possible, using the whole road on the exit it need be.

■ **ACCELERATE HARD THROUGH SURTEES,** minding the bumpy road, then stab the brakes for the sudden right kink that comes into McLaren, which climbs uphill sharply and gently takes in the final long curve (actually two separate curves). Keep a constant speed and try not to drift too much to the left.

■ **FLOOR THE THROTTLE** as soon as you see the pit entrance and keep a smooth, straight line past the start line and onto the next lap.

Brands Hatch needs a fast-medium set-up for tyres and suspension.

OULTON PARK

FROM THE START LINE, it's a full speed sprint towards the right-hander, Old Hall curve. Keep your nerve and power through at full speed, clipping the inside of the curve, this requires a perfect line through the corner.

THE NEXT BIG CORNER IS CASCADES. Ease off the gas before sweeping round and braking hard for the tight right-hand Fosters corner – it is fairly wide and allows for a choice of exit lines.

PAST THE CORNER, watch out for the bumpy track on the left-hand side before taking Knickerbrook at top speed, aiming for the rumble strips on the inside. A shallow climb to the bridge and down, and there's the long right-hand Druids curve, which can be taken at top speed (but it's safer easing off the throttle slightly, clipping both apexes as you go through). You'll need to brake early and hard for the tight right-hander, Lodge corner, where it's all too easy to lose control and spin out, or simply head straight on into the barriers.

AFTER THIS, PILE ON THE SPEED and head towards the start line and the next lap.

Oulton Park is a circuit that needs restraint and concentration. The majority of its corners are slow to medium fast.

SILVERSTONE

THE FIRST CORNER is the fast right-hander, Copse Corner which can be taken almost flat out in a touring car – just a brief lift off of the gas on the turn in, then hammer the throttle on the way out, make sure you use all the road for your line up.

AFTER COPSE move over to the right of the track. It's a flat-out run towards Maggotts, which is a left then right kink. Pile on the speed after exiting from Becketts, towards the Farm hairpin. The best way to get around it is to take notice of the marker boards. Stay on the left, throttle off at the 100m marker, then brake at the 50m marker and turn hard right. Try pumping the brakes rather than just slamming them down hard.

ACCELERATE HARD as soon as you reach the apex to straighten your car up and give yourself a good run into Bridge, which can be taken flat out.

ROUND A COUPLE of easy curves and under the bridge before the Priory left-hander which can be taken much quicker than it looks. Line the car up for Priory by keeping to the right of the track, brake hard then turn in smartly, to come out of the corner hard on the gas and up against the right-hand side rumble strips.

THE NEXT LEFT-HANDER is sharper and you need to brake early and use the all of the road to accelerate out. The right-hander at Luffield can be taken almost flat-out, and then it's down the straight and over the start line.

TOP SECRET

KNOCKHILL

■ **TRY AND KEEP ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE** after the start line, easing off before the crucial first right-hand corner. Try not to clip too much of the inner rumble strip, as it can throw you over to the left.

■ **YOU NEED TO KEEP A GOOD LINE** for the following gentle left-hander. Make sure you straighten up and brake early for the right-hand McIntyre turn.

■ **ACCELERATE HARD** out through Butchers, keeping to the left for the chicane, clip the rumble strip on the left before turning right giving it plenty of gas for the short straight.

■ **TAKE CARE AT CLARK,** go round flat out, but cut the inside and run wide using the whole width of the road coming out.

■ **PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN** in the long straight and brake hard once you pass the 100m sign, turning late and accelerating hard out. If you've taken the hairpin perfectly, it should provide you with a good opportunity to overtake other cars before the finish line.

Knockhill is fast but far from easy, especially if the weather's like this.

CROFT

■ **CROFT IS A VERY DIFFICULT TRACK** to master. Keep to the left on the starting straight, applying the brake a little coming into the first part of the nasty 180 degree Hawthorn Bend.

■ **CLIP THE RIGHT-HAND APEX** before heading for the apex of the following left-hand kink. Brake briefly again before taking the final long right-hand part of the curve smoothly and powering out.

■ **DON'T BOTHER TO BRAKE** for the chicane, but be careful not to hit the barrier on the left.

■ **FULL POWER ALL THE WAY** to the Tower Bend. Brake early, to about 75mph to get a smooth inside line and then power out all the way down the next straight, through the S-bends, clipping both apexes in as straight a line as possible, and on towards the tight Sunny double apex right-hander.

■ **EASE OFF THE ACCELERATOR** going into the first part of this complex and try and keep a straight centre line all the way through, treating the curves as one single bend.

■ **KEEP THE POWER ON** down to the left-hand sweeper, drift over to the left, brake hard and turn in early at the very sharp right-hand curve. Accelerate out, drift over to the right and brake hard, on the final hairpin take it slowly, but not too slowly, as you may be overtaken on the inside. Accelerate out for a straight run down to the line.

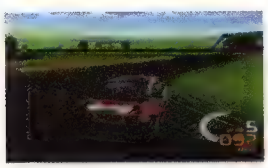
Croft is a true joy – one of *TOCA 2*'s best. It's as fast as you like... and then some.

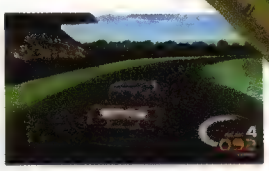
SNETTERTON

■ **AFTER THE START LINE,** move over to the left racing down Senna and if you feel brave, take the first right-hand corner at top speed, making sure you don't take it too tight to the right-hand side. Or if you are a little nervous, lift the throttle a bit and turn in. Do not hit the first apex but hit the second on exiting.

■ **BRAKE HARD** for the Sear corner as it comes up fast, turn early and clip the apex. Try to avoid running wide and clipping the left-hand barrier. Pile on the speed for the fast straight before braking hard well before the left-hand kink and slowing right down for the tricky left/right-hander (you could always try a shortcut straight across the grass to the right of the barrier and try and make it back onto the track at top speed).

■ **FULL THROTTLE OUT OF THE S-BENDS** and power through the next two easy right-handers, Bomb Hole and Coram. Brake hard again for the final chicane, Russel Bend, making sure to slow right down and make a quick right then left turn. Watch out for the pack bunching up here. Then accelerate as soon as possible and you might just have a chance of overtaking another car before the finish line.





Snetterton is not one of the most challenging circuits.

This is a good opportunity to try out a support race.

SUMMARY

Practice is the name of the game. Don't just bomb around the tracks; take your time and don't get frustrated if you keep losing control – if you don't you're not trying hard enough.

■ **EACH TRACK HAS ITS OWN DRIVING TECHNIQUE** and they need learning. Work out which bends are giving you problems and practise them until you've got them perfected.

■ **DON'T MAKE A LOT OF SMALL CORRECTIONS** left and right. Run a clean line wherever possible.

■ **DECIDE WHICH PART OF THE TRACK** you are most comfortable overtaking the other cars on, and then wait for that point before you make your bid for the lead.

■ **KEEP PRACTISING,** concentrate during the races, never let up even when you are well in front. You'll eventually win the Drivers' Championship, where an even harder challenge awaits.

Watch out for Club corner.

THRUXTON

■ **AFTER CROSSING** the start line the track curves to the right through Allard, tightening somewhat before turning to the left and running downhill. Keep to the right through Allard then ease over to the left. Getting braking right here is critical. Brake, turn in, accelerate out all the way, turning left through Cobb to clip the curve then into the right at Seagrave which opens out and climbs uphill very slightly.

■ **THE LEFT-HANDER** at Noble is easy, but it does appear quite suddenly. Full throttle and keep a smooth line.

■ **THEN IT'S A LONG GENTLE CURVE** through Goodwood, into a slightly tighter curve at Village corner.

■ **FROM HERE ON** it's full acceleration all the way, making sure to keep the steering smooth. It's very easy to spin out at top speed.

■ **AFTER THE GENTLE**, top speed curves comes the sharp Club chicane. Make sure you brake early and head straight through, clipping both apexes. This can be taken quickly if your line is correct. Make sure you don't clip the left-hand barrier. Then it's full power towards the start line.

TOP SECRET

THE MAD, BAD BEASTIE BANDICOOT IS BACK AGAIN COMPLETE WITH ORANGE ATTITUDE, SPINNING DAD DANCING AND STAGE DIVING. AND NOW HE'S GOT A NEW RANGE OF MOVES, WEAPONS, LEVELS, GEMS, CRYSTALS AND RELICS TO DEAL WITH. SO HERE'S SOME INSIDER KNOWLEDGE TO HELP YOU HELP HIM.

CRASH BANDICOOT 3:

WARPED

MOVES

For anyone who is new to the antics of the Bandicoot (where have you been?) here is a rundown of his standard abilities.

JUMP

Very simple. As you would expect this makes Crash jump a small distance. Handy for those small gaps, annoying enemies and anything else you can't spin through!

BELLY SLAM

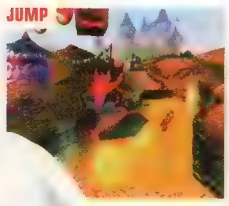
By pressing the duck button at the top of a jump, Crash will perform his famous Belly Slam move. This is the only way to break reinforced boxes, and is also handy for killing enemies.

SPIN

Crash's trademark attack. This spin will see off most enemies, except those with spikes or orange sides. It doesn't last very long, so look out for the extra spins you can pick up along the way!

SLIDE

By running along and pressing ◎, Crash will perform a baseball-esque slide. This is handy to ensure the enemy you kill goes in the right direction, or for sliding under something.



CRAWL

If you press a direction while you are holding ◎, or keep ◎ held down after a slide, you will crawl. This is mainly used for going under low blocks and crossing spotlights.

BOXING CLEVER

As with all the other *Crash* games, there are several different kinds of box for Crash to destroy and a few other things he should take careful note of.

NORMAL BOX

The standard box. These normally contain a single apple.

? BOX

These can be broken with any attack and may contain one apple, five apples, or ten apples. And you can't tell which. Either way, they are definitely worth getting.

BOUNCE BOX

Looking like a normal box with black stripes on these contain one apple if you break it, but jump on it or under it and you'll get ten!

SPRING BOX / METAL SPRING BOX

A box with an upward-facing arrow on, these are used to get you to higher places. The metal ones cannot be broken at all. By holding jump while on one you can jump higher.

! BOX

This box does one of two things. Either blow up all the Nitro boxes on the level, or fill in some white squares with boxes. Either way it's vital when trying to get all the boxes on a level.

WHITE BOX

The content of this box changes, more rapidly as you get closer to it. It will normally be either blank, a ? box or an Extra Life box.

Occasionally it will change to a TNT box, so be careful when you break it! If you leave it too long it will turn into a metal box.

EXTRA LIFE BOX

Like Ronseal. It does what it says on the box.

C BOX

C stands for Check Point. Break this box and that's what it opens up to be! Wonderful isn't it?

MASK BOX

Break this baby open and you'll get Mask protection. This means that you can take a hit without dying. Break two Mask boxes and you can take two hits, and if you can break three, you'll be invulnerable for a short time. Be warned that however many masks you have you'll still be killed if you fall off the level.

TNT BOX

Do anything to these except jump on them – they'll blow up immediately, taking you with them. If you jump on them, they count down from three before blowing up, which should give you enough time to escape.

NITRO BOX

These are very deadly. If you touch one you will die. It's that simple. So funnily enough, the advice is to avoid them at all costs. There are still a few ways to break them safely though. You can use the Apple Launcher, send an enemy into them, or break the ! box if you can find it. The Apple Launcher is the best bet though, but until you get this, rely on the ! box.

CHUNKY PLATFORMS!

Not only do you have to negotiate tricky paths and passages, but each land level has at least one Chunky Platform for you to hop onto.

? PLATFORM

You will find one of these ? platforms on every land level in the game. It will take you to a bonus area, where you can get stack loads of lives to help you on your way.

SKULL AND CROSSBONES PLATFORM

When you first go through a level, these will appear as transparent platforms with white lines. To make them solid you get every gem on that world (all you can get without the platform). Only then will it appear and take you to a difficult route though the level, often ending in a gem.

COLOURED PLATFORM

Again, these first appear as wire-frame platforms, but if you find the gem of the same colour they will become solid, taking you to an extra part of the level. This extra part will be crucial as it will allow you to get those missing boxes or even the Clear Gem!

CRASH DESTRUCTION

By defeating a boss, our hero gets a new move. These should be found as soon as possible.

BOSS DEFEATED – TINY TIGER

Skill received: Spinning Belly Splash

This makes Crash's belly smash even more potent. By pressing ◎ when you are jumping you can make Crash do a powerful Belly Splash. This will kill all enemies that are not just under it, but near it. It's also the only way Crash can open reinforced wooden crates.

BOSS DEFEATED – DINGODILE

Skill received: Double Jump

By pressing jump again at the peak of your jump, Crash will get an extra boost of height, allowing him to clear those long gaps or break those high up boxes. Never underestimate the importance of this skill.

BOSS DEFEATED – N. TROPY

Skill received: Super Sprint

By holding down the ▭ button, Crash will pump his arms and run a lot faster. This is mainly useful for completing the Time Trials and getting those gold relics.

BOSS DEFEATED – N. GIN

Skill received: Power Spin

This allows Crash to perform five spins in a row without pause. This makes killing enemies and breaking boxes much easier. It also makes Crash glide, so combined with the Double Jump he can clear massive gaps too. Be warned though, once initiated, the Power Spin cannot be stopped, so make sure you use it wisely.

BOSS DEFEATED – N. CORTEX

Skill received: Apple Launcher

The best new ability for Crash. By holding ▭, he will draw his weapon giving you a crosshair to aim with. Nitro boxes, or just anything you want to shoot at! It's a top laugh!

TOP SECRET

WORLD ONE

LEVEL 1 – TOAD VILLAGE

Gems: Box

The first level is, as ever, very easy. It gives you a chance to practise your attacks and get a feel for the controls. Spin-attack all the enemies, and grab all the boxes. The box gem should be very easy to get. When you have finished the level, go in again, and get the relic. You should be able to get the Platinum Relic first go.

TOAD VILLAGE

UNDER PRESSURE

LEVEL 2 – UNDER PRESSURE

Gems: Box

A first in the *Crash* trilogy, here you are underwater. A quick press of ⊗ will give you a short speed burst. The best idea on this level is to simply ignore all the enemies and concentrate on surviving. The underwater jetski you get is very useful, as it can fire missiles, which break the red plants open, revealing the boxes behind. Not only this, but it can perform a super speed burst, vital when you are going for the time trial.

LEVEL 3 – ORIENT EXPRESS

Gems: Box

An idea that stretches back to *Crash 1* is the "leap on an animal's back and ride it through the level" idea. This time it's a little tiger cub, so leap on its back, and let's go! As ever, pressing ◎ makes him gallop, which is essential for getting the relic. The only things you need to watch out for here are the barrels that are rolled down some hills, and the spring men, which won't kill you, but will bounce you up to the higher level – this might mean that you will miss some boxes.

ORIENT EXPRESS

BONE YARD

LEVEL 4 – BONE YARD

Gems: Box

Hot lava and steaming geysers are the main hazards on this level. It starts off fairly simply, the usual into-the-screen action. Break the egg halfway through and you can climb aboard... something. It looks like a baby dinosaur, and strike me down can it jump! It also provides you with extra protection, acting like a mask.

LEVEL 5 – MAKIN' WAVES

Gems: Box

Another first for Crash is this jetbike level. It can be quite easy to get lost here, so keep an eye on the arrow at the top of the screen as it shows you the right direction to take. The main danger on these levels is the floating bombs. Some of these move and some stay still. Other hazards to avoid include the bombs that are fired by the ship, rowing boats, and the exceedingly annoying men who wield anchors! The box gem may prove tricky as well, as a couple of boxes are cunningly hidden behind ramps.

MAKIN' WAVES

WORLD TWO

LEVEL 1 – GEE WIZ

Gems: Box

This level introduces the Wizard enemy. This is a particularly nasty enemy who fires out magic spells that are tricky to avoid. Other than these, the rest of the level is fairly easy, with just the usual frogs, knights, and goats to avoid. The box gem is very straightforward too. The only moment where you might suffer is right at the end, when you have to hit an ! box, which is surrounded by Nitro boxes. Make sure you are clear of them all, especially the ones behind you.

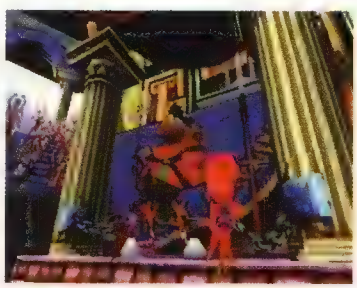
LEVEL 2 – HANG 'EM HIGH

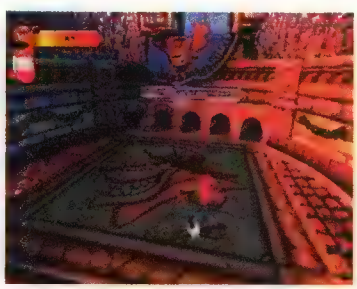
Gems: Box, Yellow

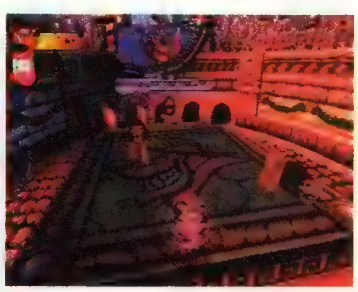
The first of the 'Hanging' levels. There are a couple of difficult enemies to face here, the worst of which is definitely the Swash-Buckler, who is completely invulnerable when he starts swinging his sword, so you just have to wait until his back is turned before giving him the spin treatment. The other enemy which may

WORLD ONE BOSS – TINY TIGER

Returning from *Crash 2* is the character Tiny. This time he's much easier though. When he starts stomping, run around until he plants his trident in the ground, then spin attack him. He'll then release the lions. They can be killed with the spin attack, but there is normally another lion following up which will eat you as your spin ends. So you're better off avoiding them. Tiny will soon start jumping around. Use the same tactic as before. His last attack is more lions. Again, avoid them, then finish Tiny off.







GEE WHIZ

HANG 'EM HIGH

trouble you is the Pot Lady. She carries a wobbling tower of pots, and if you spin-attack her, one falls over her head and then she tries to ram you off the platform. The best way to kill her is simply to slide her. This will send her flying off the level, hopefully taking other undesirables with her. You use the netting by standing under it, pressing and holding jump to cling onto it, and you can press ▢ to spin and press ◯ to lift your legs up.

Yellow Gem: The only way to get this extra gem on the Hang 'em High is through the special Warp Room, which becomes active after you have defeated N. Cortex.

LEVEL 3 – HOG RIDE

Gems: Box

Yet another new idea for *Crash 3*, on this level you have to compete in a race. To get the crystal you have to come first. If you simply follow the other cars, trying to get inside them whenever you can, you should be OK. Watch out for the green zipper pads, as these give you a massive speed burst which continues until you release the accelerator. The only downside to this is that it is very hard to steer when you are pulling a wheelie! The box gem seems fairly simple, until you keep finishing with one box short. If you go back, you'll see it hiding just behind a ramp.

HOG RIDE

TOMB TIME

LEVEL 4 – TOMB TIME

Gems: Box, Clear

In these Tomb levels, you have to enter and survive one of N. Cortex's tombs. They are full of booby traps and strange enemies, so make sure you keep your wits about you. The Flame-thrower men are particularly dangerous, as you have to time your run well, or be burnt to a crisp. When you step on the stone switches, other platforms pop out for a short time, allowing you to jump onto them.

Clear Gem: In order to find the Clear Gem on the Tomb Time level you have to already have the Purple Gem. Without it, you will not be able to open the purple door. But carry on down this tricky path, and it will end up at the Clear Gem.

LEVEL 5 – MIDNIGHT RUN

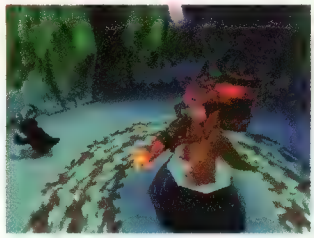
Gems: Box

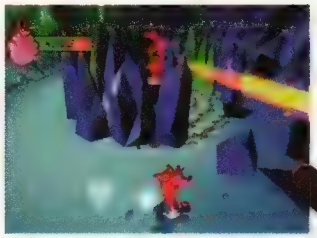
This is another riding level, but taking place at night. And you have new enemies to cope with. The Dragons are the worst, as they can move in three different patterns. They are either low, so you have to jump over them, high, so you have to stay low under them, or a mix of both, so you have to pick your time carefully to get past them. Remember to gallop whenever you can if you are chasing the relic.

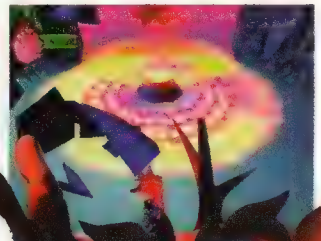
MIDNIGHT RUN

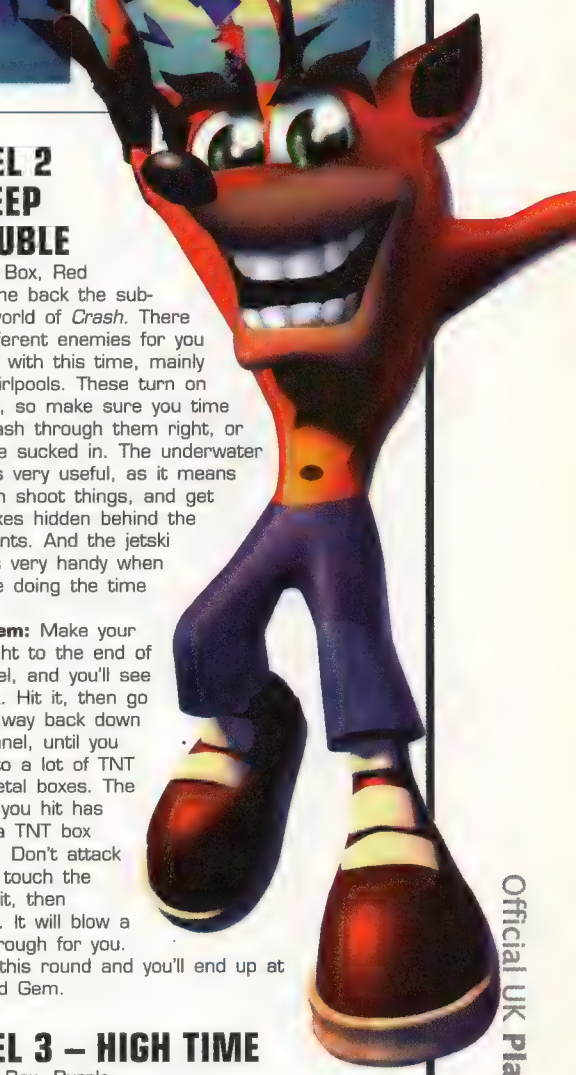
WORLD TWO BOSS – DINGODILE

This boss is a hard nut to crack. Avoid the falling fire, then keep running, and switching direction. This will make the Dingodile fire his gun at the place you were. Soon you should see how to get to him: Go in, spin attack him, then get out before you get trapped in. Twice more and it's all over.









WORLD THREE

LEVEL 1 – DINO MIGHT

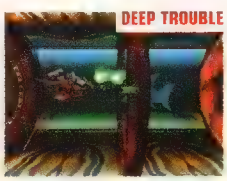
Gems: Box, Clear

This level is U-shaped, in that you start off running away from the screen, change to sideways scrolling, then end up legging it from a massive Triceratops! The first stage of this level is fairly easy; just remember to time your attack on the Crash Seals; wait until they stop spinning before you attack them. Watch out for the steaming geysers and lava flows as before. Make sure you break open the egg, and ride the baby dino again. Even if you get hit, you can hop back on him again and carry on.

Clear Gem: To get the Clear Gem, you have to already have the Red Gem. It creates a platform which takes you to another U-shaped level, finishing in a very difficult 'into the screen' chase level, at the end of which is the Clear Gem.

DINO MIGHT

DEEP TROUBLE



LEVEL 2 – DEEP TROUBLE

Gems: Box, Red

Welcome back the sub-aqua world of *Crash*. There are different enemies for you to deal with this time, mainly the whirlpools. These turn on and off, so make sure you time your dash through them right, or you'll be sucked in. The underwater jetski is very useful, as it means you can shoot things, and get the boxes hidden behind the red plants. And the jetski dash is very handy when you are doing the time trial.

Red Gem: Make your way right to the end of the level, and you'll see a ! box. Hit it, then go all the way back down the tunnel, until you come to a lot of TNT and metal boxes. The switch you hit has made a TNT box appear. Don't attack it, just touch the top of it, then retreat. It will blow a way through for you. Follow this round and you'll end up at the Red Gem.

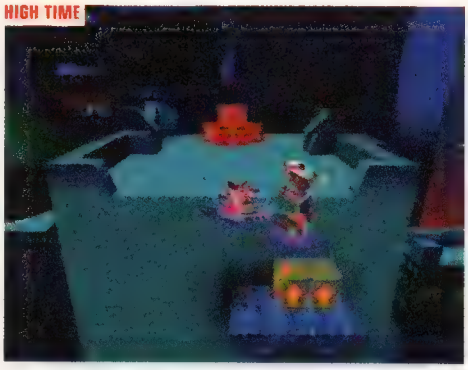
LEVEL 3 – HIGH TIME

Gems: Box, Purple

Not too different to Hang 'em High on the enemy front, but you do have to do a lot more net hanging. The perspective can make this a bit tricky in places, but keep concentrating and you should be OK. Don't forget that by holding jump down as you bounce on a trampoline ledge, you'll jump higher. This can prove invaluable later on in this level.

Purple Gem: To find the Purple Gem, you have to get onto the Skull and Crossbones platform. But it won't be made solid until you've managed to collect every other gem, crystal, and relic on this world.

TOP SECRET



LEVEL 4 – ROAD CRASH

Gems: Box

Another bike race, only this time you have Police cars to avoid, as well as barriers, opponents, and bottomless ravines. Remember to slow down for sharp bends, because if you go too far off the road, you'll lose too much time. You can overtake your opponents on the inside of a bend if you get it just right. If you hit all the zipper pads you should be able to win the race and get that crystal without any problem.

LEVEL 5 – DOUBLE HEADER

Gems: Box

This level introduces you to some rather nasty-looking giants, who, if you get too close, will happily use their clubs to bash you right into the camera! The way to kill them is to double jump onto the top of their heads. However, the best advice is to wait until one side swings a club, then run past that particular side. Other than these Giants, the rest of the level is very similar to the Gee Wiz level, only a little bit harder. To get the Platinum Relic you will have to hold R2 throughout the entire level. Which is not quite as hard as it sounds.

WORLD FOUR

LEVEL 1 – SPHYNXINATOR

Gems: Box, Clear

Another tomb level, and the same advice applies. The most common ways to die on this level are to be lanced by the Spikes, which spring up, then retract, or to be squashed by falling blocks. The Spikes can be spun through without damage, and the falling blocks need to be given a wider berth as they are a lot broader than they look – they can often squash you when you thought you were safely past.

Clear Gem: You can only get this after you have acquired the Blue Gem. Hop on the Blue Platform midway through the level, and it will take you to a different part of the tomb, to a very tricky route, the end of which holds the Clear Gem.

LEVEL 2 – BYE BYE BLIMPS

Gems: Box

A very easy level this, and a new idea to the Crash series. In this free-roaming level you have to shoot down all the blimps, or hot air balloons. Simply fly towards each one, guns a-blazing, and if you are being shot at yourself, keep tapping the ○ button, as this makes you spin, and impervious to enemy fire. If you are getting low on health, shoot the medical balloons.

LEVEL 3 – TELL NO TALES

Gems: Box

This level is another one for the jetski. Watch out for the pirate ships that fire cannonballs out at you. Try to go right through the middle of them, that way you don't lose any speed. You may find that you have trouble getting all the boxes, and you will probably have to go through the level again backwards to find them. You have to go around the back of the last pirate ship where you'll find there are five more boxes cheekily tucked away.

LEVEL 4 – FUTURE FRENZY

Gems: Box, Clear

On this level make sure you remember that you cannot touch anything orange, or you'll get zapped. The little men in flying saucers can be killed by jumping directly on top of them, or by the Apple Launcher. If you are going for the box gem make sure you jump over the ! box in the middle of the level, so you can get the boxes underneath where the metal boxes will form. To kill the ED-209-type enemies, dodge their three rockets, then hit into the target on their back.

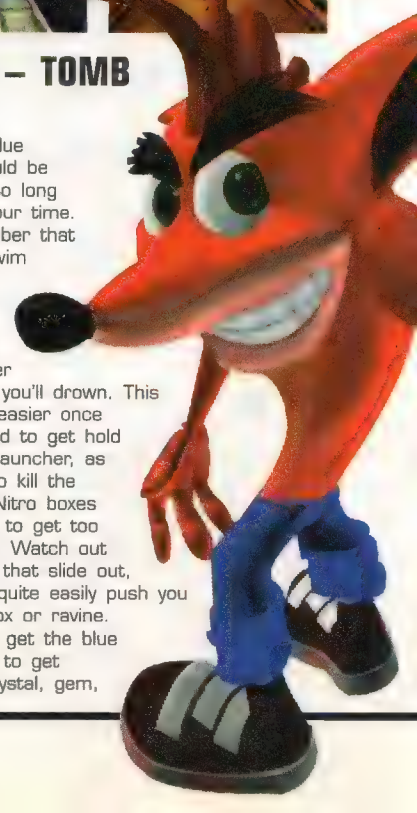
Clear Gem: The only way to get the Clear Gem is to follow the extra route from the secret Warp Room.

LEVEL 5 – TOMB WADER

Gems: Box, Blue

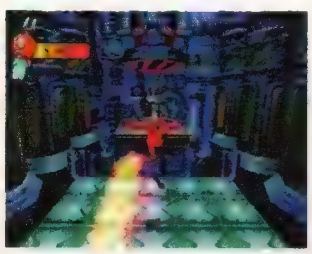
This level should be easy enough so long as you take your time. Always remember that Crash can't swim without sub-aqua gear, so jump on the platforms when the water level rises, or you'll drown. This level is much easier once you've managed to get hold of the Apple Launcher, as it allows you to kill the enemies and Nitro boxes without having to get too close to them. Watch out for the blocks that slide out, as these can quite easily push you into a Nitro box or ravine.

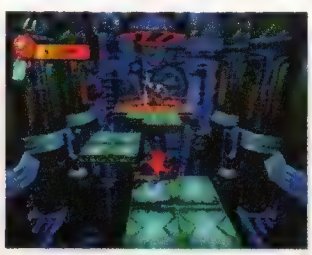
Blue Gem: To get the blue gem you have to get every other crystal, gem,

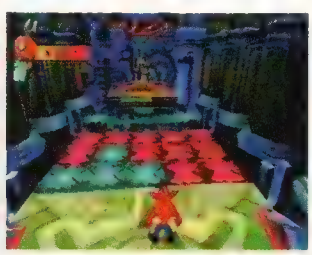


WORLD THREE BOSS – N TROPY

N. Tropy is a very easy boss to defeat. When you start, he will fire an energy ball at you. Jump it. Then he will try and shoot some lasers at you. Simply hop over them, then watch to see which tiles are flashing, and get on one that isn't. The flashing tiles will fall away. Now make your way over to him, and spin attack him. This time, when he fires the energy balls, the second one will be high, so duck under it. Repeat the attack procedure twice more, and it's game over for N. Tropy!



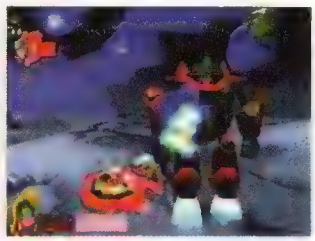


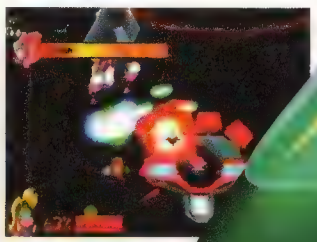


CRASH BANDICOOT 3: WARPED

WORLD FOUR BOSS – N. GIN

Crash gets to pilot a rather snazzy flying machine for this boss, and at a press of the O button the Tiger you ride comes and helps you, so you can now fire three shots at once. Aim for the flashing yellow parts on N. Gin's ship, and after three hits he will retreat... only to return with much more power than any of the other bosses! However, he is still fairly easy to kill, as long as you keep moving, and shooting the rockets he fires out.





and relic available in this world, apart from the ones that need the Blue Gem. When you have these, the skull and crossbones platform will become solid, taking you to a tough sub level which leads to this last gem.

WORLD FIVE

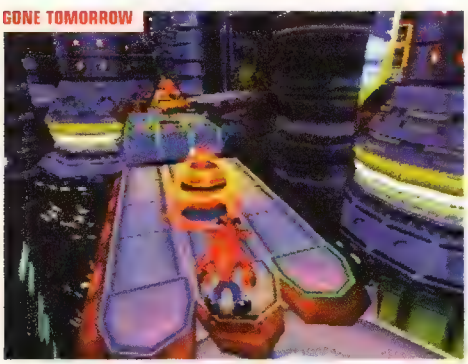
LEVEL 1 – GONE TOMORROW

Gems: Box, Clear

Another futuristic level, only this time it's much harder. Remember that you can't touch anything orange again, or you'll get zapped, again! The ED-209 robots are back, and just as hard as ever to kill. As long as you take your time this level is not actually that bad, it's getting the relics that's going to cause you the problems, because too much haste can force you to make mistakes, and on this level there's simply not any room for errors!

Clear Gem: You have to have already got the Green Gem, then jump on the Green platform for the route to the Clear Gem.

GONE TOMORROW



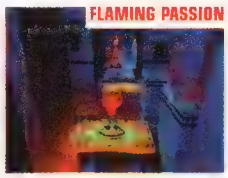
LEVEL 2 – ORANGE ASPHALT

Gems: Box

Yep, you're back on the road. This time, however, the Police cars move across the road, trying to impede your progress. They are quite easily avoided though, just aim toward the side they are on the second you see them. This level sees a lot of jumps over ravines, so make sure you hit the ramp, or you'll be free-falling. You can actually get past ravines by going right to the outside of the track. It'll slow you down, but at least you'll not fall in!

ORANGE ASPHALT

FLAMING PASSION



LEVEL 3 – FLAMING PASSION

Gems: Box, Green

As the name suggests, there is a lot of fire on this level to avoid. It's worth noticing though that if you are doing the time trial, you can double jump and spin around any fire, so you don't have to wait for it to die down. There are also some tricky 3-D jumps to perform, so make sure you take your time on these, or you'll find yourself right back at the start of the level again.

Green Gem: You have to use the Skull and Crossbones platform, which again means getting all the other gems, crystals, and relics on this world first. It's no mean task.

LEVEL 4 – MAD BOMBERS

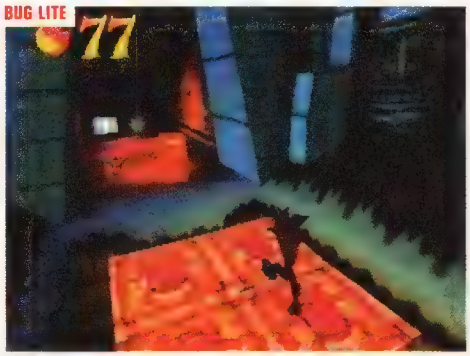
Gems: Box

Another flying level, this one being a bit trickier. The main difference is that your target is now a lot smaller, and is moving. What you are aiming for are the two engines on each of the enemy bombers.

Remember to spin if you are under enemy fire. Use the arrow at the top of the screen as a waypointer – it shows you the way to the nearest bomber.

MAD BOMBERS

BUG LITE

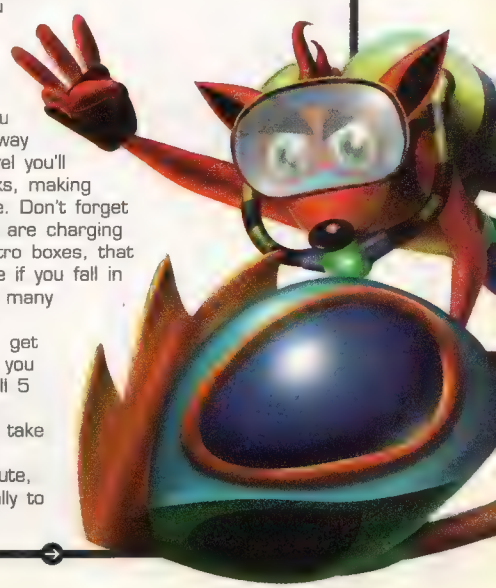


LEVEL 5 – BUG LITE

Gems: Box, Clear

The last normal level in the game sees the returns of the Glow bugs, first seen in *Crash 2*. They will stay with you for a while, then go, so make sure you get a new bug whenever you can! Don't grab them as soon as you see them, make sure any doors in your way are open before you pick it up. Midway through the level you'll get three masks, making you invulnerable. Don't forget though, as you are charging through the Nitro boxes, that you can still die if you fall in any one of the many ravines around.

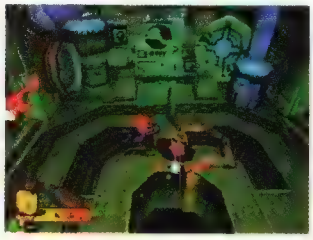
Clear Gem: To get the Clear Gem you have to have all 5 of the coloured gems. This will take you on a very treacherous route, leading eventually to the Clear Gem.

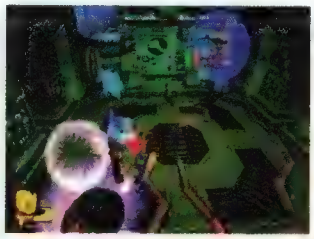


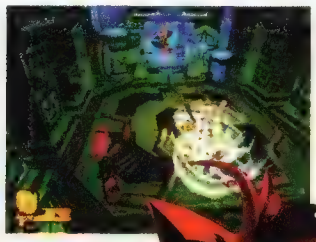
TOP SECRET CRASH BANDICOOT 3: WARPED

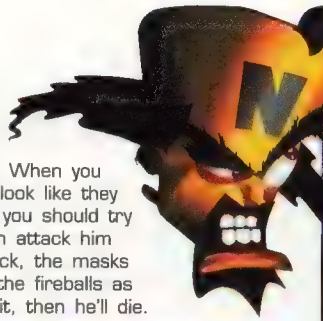
WORLD FIVE BOSS – NEO CORTEX

The toughest boss in the game, and it may take some time to kill him. First of all, jump the spinning beam while avoiding the fireballs. When Cortex starts chucking mines, make your way over to him, and spin attack when his shield is down. Now you have to spin attack him again and again, trying to bounce him down the pit in the middle of the floor. When you do this, he loses a chuck of energy. Now the masks join together, and look like they are following you. They're not, they're just following a set pattern which you should try to learn, still dodging Cortex's fireballs. When he's lobbed his mines spin attack him again, and then again trying to spin him down the pit. For his final attack, the masks join together, and then dive at you. Keep moving and jumping, avoiding the fireballs as well. As before, when the mines are thrown, spin attack him into the pit, then he'll die.









LEVEL 4 – FUTURE FRENZY

Gems: Clear

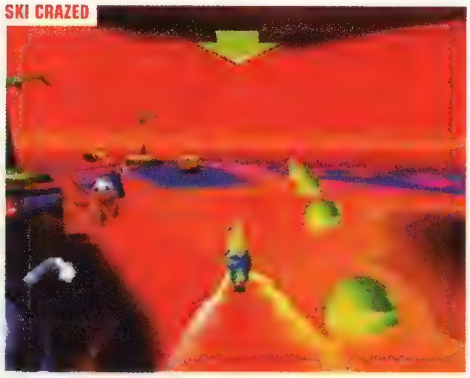
Again, similar to Hang 'em High in that this is just an addition to the main level Future Frenzy. This route will lead you to the Clear Gem.

WORLD SIX

LEVEL 1 – SKI CRAZED

Gems: Box

The final jetski level. Finishing this level itself isn't too tricky, nor is getting all the boxes. However, this is without doubt the hardest level in the game for getting the Gold Relic. There are so many yellow time-off boxes, most of them surrounded by bombs. You'll need all your skill to get the Gold Relic on this level.



LEVEL 3 – AREA 51?

Gems: Box

The trickiest racing level by far. This time you're up against some UFOs. Nice. Not only this, but the Police cars now drive straight for you as oncoming traffic! Add to this the fact that you are now racing at night, with only your little headlamp for light, and it becomes a very tough level. If you see any barriers, this means there is a ravine right behind it, so move over sharpish!

LEVEL 5 – RINGS OF POWER

Gems: Box, Clear

The final level of *Crash Bandicoot 3*, and it's not all that hard. Simply fly through all the rings. That's it. But the hard part comes when you try for the relic – especially the Gold Relic. The only way to do this is by spinning through each ring. This gives you a speed burst but makes controlling your ship difficult.

THE ULTRA SECRET

And for the player who wants to take himself to another level, or two...

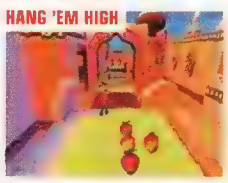
HOT COCO

The first Hot Coco can be found in the level Hog Wild (second motorcycle level). There is an alien sign on the left side of the road. Hit it and you will warp to the secret level Hot Coco. The gem on this level is won by getting all the boxes.

LEVEL 2 – HANG 'EM HIGH

Gems: Yellow

This isn't a stand-alone level, merely an add-on to the original Hang 'em High level. It is the only way to get the Yellow Gem.



THE RELIC WARP

This is reached via a small platform that appears in the middle of the main Warp area (near the Load/Save screen) after you've picked up the first five relics. The doorways to the three levels here, as well as the doorway to the two Warps into the hidden parts of two of the normal levels in the game open after five, ten, 15, 20 and 25 relics have been picked up.

EGGIPUS REX

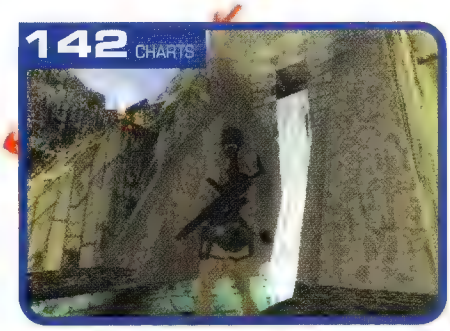
The second secret level is Eggipus Rex. This is reached by getting yourself killed (or at least trying to get yourself killed) on the second Pterodactyl (bird dinosaur) that you come across on the Yellow Gem path in the level Dynomite! – the second Jurrasic level. Obscure but true. The gem is at the end of the level, and the relic is attained by beating the clock on the time trial again. A very tough nut to crack indeed.

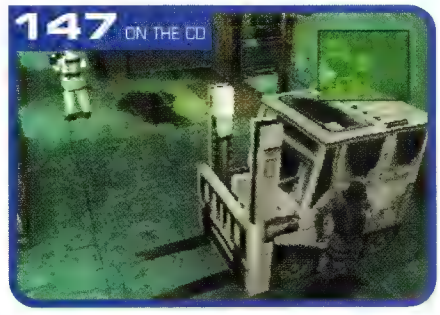
NEXT MONTH: THE *PSM* TEAM SOFTENS UP *METAL GEAR SOLID*

DOWN LOADING

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END BUT WE'RE NOT QUITE FINISHED YET. THIS IS THE SECTION OF THE MAG WHERE WE INVITE YOU TO UNWIND WITH A COMBINATION OF FACTS, FIGURES AND OPINION FROM YOUR FELLOW READERS...

132	A-Z OF GAMES
141	WORLD WIDE PLAYSTATION
142	CHARTS
146	BACK ISSUES
147	ON THE CD
157	LETTERS
160	NEXT MONTH
162	JUST THE FAX

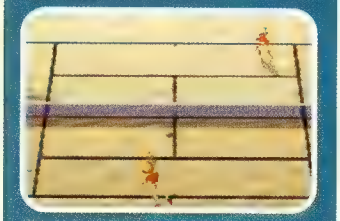




TOP FIVE SPORTS GAMES

EVERYBODY'S GOLF
PSM34 – 9/10 – Cutesy golf game
We say: "If you like your golf to be a bit of fun then you should try *Everybody's Golf*."

ISS PRO '98
PSM36 – 9/10 – Football sim
We say: "*ISS Pro '98* is the best football game you can buy."



SMASH COURT TENNIS
PSM14 – 8/10 – Tennis sim
We say: "This is by far the best tennis game available."

TOTAL NBA '97
PSM19 – 9/10 – Basketball sim
We say: "All is rosy in the garden. *Total NBA '97* is a wonderful basketball game."

FIFA '99
PSM40 – 8/10 – Football sim
We say: "Every aspect of the game works beautifully with the other..."

A TO Z

HERE IT BE – *THE* MOST COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PLAYSTATION GAMES EVER! WE RATE 'EM! WE SLATE 'EM! WE BET YOU HAVEN'T PLAYED 'EM (ALL)! NOW READ ON...

A

ACE COMBAT 2
Namco – *PSM27* – 5/10 – Flight sim
Fantastic full-on action, but you can finish it in a day.

ACTUA GOLF
Gremlin – *PSM9* – 8/10 – Golf sim
The fluid player animation and the varied commentary is combined to good effect.

ACTUA GOLF 2
Gremlin – *PSM22* – 7/10 – Golf sim
Better graphics and new shots fail to hide basic gameplay limitations.

ACTUA GOLF 3
Gremlin – *PSM40* – 6/10 – Golf sim
A game for the full-on golf fan alone, but with a dated control system.

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY
Gremlin – *PSM30* – 6/10 – Ice hockey sim
Very ordinary game with slow graphics and many minor niggles.

ACTUA SOCCER
Gremlin – *PSM3* – 9/10 – Football sim
A slick and accomplished early bash at this overcrowded game genre.

ACTUA SOCCER 2
Gremlin – *PSM27* – 9/10 – Football sim
A hard game to master, but stick with it. A great footie game.

ACTUA SOCCER 3
Gremlin – *PSM40* – 6/10 – Football sim
Not enough moves and fails to convey the sport's flowing nature.

ACTUA SOCCER CLUB EDITION
Gremlin – *PSM20* – 7/10 – Football sim
Basically *Actua Soccer* with national rather than international sides.

ACTUA TENNIS
Gremlin – *PSM38* – 5/10 – Tennis sim
The infinitely more fun *Smash Court Tennis* remains supreme.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER
Psygnosis – *PSM6* – 8/10 – Football sim
The George Best of footie sims: wild, eccentric, but oh so captivating.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER 2
Psygnosis – *PSM28* – 7/10 – Football sim
There are better footie games around, but this has grit and flair.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER INT.
Psygnosis – *PSM18* – 8/10 – Football sim
New modes and more realistic team and player abilities. Not a lot else.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '98
Psygnosis – *PSM35* – 5/10 – Football sim
Disappointing and often infuriating. Packed with minor glitches.

ADVENTURES OF LOMAX
Psygnosis – *PSM13* – 5/10 – Platformer
Fine looking, but very old-fashioned. Would have been good on the NES.

AGENT ARMSTRONG
Virgin – *PSM26* – 4/10 – Platform/shoot 'em up
Too old-fashioned. Poor graphics and basic gameplay.

AGILE WARRIOR
Virgin – *PSM3* – 6/10 – Air combat sim
Rough and unpolished flight 'em up with a few redeeming features.

AIR COMBAT
Namco – *PSM1* – 6/10 – Air combat sim
Flashy Namco arcade conversion too short and too easy to merit unguarded acclaim.

AIR RACE
THQ – *PSM26* – 7/10 – Racing/flight sim
Pleasantly surprising. Obvious faults, but robust, smart and fun-filled.

AIV EVOLUTION GLOBAL
Acclaim – *PSM9* – 7/10 – Strategy
Snappily titled *Sim-City* clone. Deep, challenging, but slow in places.

ALIEN TRILOGY
Acclaim – *PSM5* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Pant-wettingly scary. *Doom* clone with emphasis on intellect and agility.

ALL STAR SOCCER
Eidos Interactive – *PSM23* – 6/10 – Football sim
Comedy commentary tries to uplift this mediocre footie sim but it fails miserably.

ALL STAR TENNIS
UbiSoft – *PSM40* – 7/10 Tennis sim
Not recommended for the lone player, but those with a multi-tap should definitely investigate.

ALLIED GENERAL
Mindscape – *PSM20* – 5/10 – Wargame
Dated, graphically hideous wargame with few gameplay plus points.

ALONE IN THE DARK
Infogrames – *PSM2* – 8/10 – Action adventure
One of the most picturesque and playable adventures around.

ALUNDRA
Psygnosis – *PSM31* – 9/10 – RPG
Legend Of Zelda for the PlayStation, and not before time. Absolutely, compulsively addictive.

ANDRETTI RACING '97
EA – *PSM11* – 7/10 – Racing sim
Varied, fun, but slightly clunky racer. Pales in comparison to *Ridge Racer*.

APOCALYPSE
Activision – *PSM41* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Flawed but has a *je ne sais quoi* that makes it stand out from the trigger-happy crowd.

AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY
SCEE – *PSM9* – 4/10 – Scuba sim
'Underwater experience' title which soon bores rather than captivates.

AREA 51
GTi – *PSM21* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
A tedious, repetitive and unforgivably slow *Time Crisis* forebear.

ARMOURED CORE
SCEE – *PSM35* – 8/10 – Mech shoot 'em up
Engrossing, weapons-grade mech action. Variable missions.

ASSAULT
TES – *PSM37* – 6/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Tension-relieving blasting, but the 3D perspective means aiming problems and unfair deaths.

ASSAULT RIGS
Psygnosis – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Combat maze game
Battle Zone-inspired, hunt-and-blast title with a great two-player option.

THE ATARI COLLECTION 2
GTi – *PSM36* – 7/10 – Retro collection
The best retro game compilation to date, but most games fail to hold their own in the '90s.

ASTEROIDS
Activision– *PSM41* – 7/10 – Retro shoot 'em up
Fun, addictive but it's never going to be more than a blast from the past.

ATLANTIS
Cryo – *PSM39* – 5/10 – Point 'n' click adventure
No looks or charisma. Try harder.

ATARI COLLECTION 1, THE
GTi – *PSM18* – 3/10 – Retro collection
Six old games that should be avoided by all but nostalgia freaks.

AUTO DESTRUCT
EA – *PSM29* – 6/10 – Racing /strategy
Not all bad. Bones of the game are good but it soon becomes repetitive.

AYRTON SENNA KART DUEL
EA – *PSM15* – 3/10 – Racing game
Terribly produced and exploitative mess of a karting game. Stay away.

AYRTON SENNA KART DUEL 2
EA – *PSM36* – 4/10 – Kart racing
Low quality, simplistic racer. Rough, ropy, clunky.

AZURE DREAMS
Konami – *PSM37* – 7/10 – RPG
Intriguing but quirky, if it appeals to you then you'll be hooked for weeks.

B

B-MOVIE
GTi – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Contains depth and manages to stay fresh despite its simple premise. A good, solid game.

BABY UNIVERSE
SCEE – *PSM38* – 4/10 – 3D kaleidoscope
An amusing trifle. But when was the last time you paid £30 for a trifle?

BALLBLAZER
EA – *PSM23* – 5/10 – Future sport sim
Lacklustre update of the ancient Commodore 64 title. Stick to footie.

BATMAN & ROBIN
Acclaim – *PSM35* – 6/10 – Arcade/adventure
Too many ideas fighting for attention, none of them realised.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN
SCEE – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up
This weapons-based 3D punch-up is a key title which still impresses.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2
SCEE – *PSM7* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Disappointingly similar sequel which adds only extra graphical finesse.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 3
SCEE – *PSM24* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Marginally better than its prequel but still no contender for *Tekken*.

BEDLAM
GTi – *PSM16* – 5/10 – Military strategy
A messy, jerky joyride which proves more exhausting than enjoyable.

BIG HURT BASEBALL
Acclaim – *PSM9* – 6/10 – Baseball sim
The visuals are really the all that impress in this flawed sim.

BIO FREAKS
GTi – *PSM37* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Provides hearty laughter and blood-stained enjoyment. Good fun.

BLACK DAWN
EA – *PSM13* – 8/10 – Air combat sim
Decent helicopter game with good visuals and challenging missions.

BLAZE & BLADE: Eternal Quest
Funsoft – *PSM41*– 6/10 – RPG
Nice try FunSoft, but not really very practical. Doesn't cut the mustad.

BLAM! MACHINEHEAD
EA – *PSM11* – 8/10 – Roam 'n' shoot
Nice-looking sci-fi blaster with the odd interesting touch.

BLAST CHAMBER
Activision – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Puzzle game
Innovative and mentally challenging puzzle/sport/shoot 'em up crossover.

BLAST RADIUS
Psygnosis – *PSM35* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Thoroughly enjoyable arcade-style shoot 'em up.

BLASTO
SCEE – *PSM36* – 6/10 – Cartoon adventures
A cartoon cavalcade of astrogalactic gymnastic insanity. If only it was faster, had better controls...

BLAZING DRAGONS
BMG – *PSM14* – 5/10 – Adventure game
Simplistic, formulaic adventure title aimed at kids. Poor blighters.

BLOOD OMEN: LEGACY OF KAIN
BMG – *PSM17* – 7/10 – RPG
Ambitious yet severely limited hack 'n' slash affair riddled with small flaws.

BLOODY ROAR: HYPER BEAST DUEL
Virgin – *PSM29* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up
Lack of fighting-style variety, but heaps of strategy and a visual treat.

BOMBERMAN WORLD
SCEE – *PSM34* – 6/10 – Arcade game
Adequate, but with irritating control foibles. Good multiplayer mode.

BRAHMA FORCE
JVC – *PSM30* – 7/10 – First-person shoot 'em up
Kileak returns, but, despite some clever features, no real improvement.

BREAK POINT
Ocean – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Tennis sim
Slightly over-complicated, but a good racket workout, nevertheless.

BREATH OF FIRE III
Virgin – *PSM35* – 8/10 – RPG
Great fun Japanese RPG. A cross between *Vandal-Hearts* and *FFVII*.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET
Codemasters – *PSM39* – 8/10 – Cricket sim
A well executed cricket sim and enjoyable to play.

✪ BROKEN SWORD
SCEE – *PSM11* – 9/10 – Adventure
A beautifully crafted epic awash with atmosphere and Parisian chic.

✪ BROKEN SWORD II: THE SMOKING MIRROR
SCEE – *PSM27* – 9/10 – Adventure
One of the most atmospheric adventure games money can buy.

BUBBLE BOBBLE 2
Virgin – *PSM20* – 8/10 – Platformer
Compelling gameplay. Cute graphics. Great longevity. Nuff said.

BUBSY 3D
Telstar – *PSM26* – 3/10 – 3D platformer
A dreadful game on a previously unheard of scale.

BUGGY
Gremlin – *PSM38* – 6/10 – Comic racer
Fun, but ultimately lacks the kind of polish modern gamers demand.

BURNING ROAD
Sunsoft – *PSM12* – 5/10 – Racing game
Bland arcade-style title which aims at *Ridge Racer* and falls way short.

BUSHIDO BLADE
SCEE – *PSM29* – 8/10 – 3D knife 'em up
Not for the squeamish, but a welcome revamp of an o.d genre.

BUST A GROOVE
SCEE – *PSM38* – 8/10 – Dancing sim
Almost arousing to watch, occasionally repetitive to play.

✪ BUST-A-MOVE 2
Acclaim – *PSM8* – 9/10 – Puzzler
Simple, yet infuriatingly addictive *Tetris*-style puzzler. A near legend.

✪ BUST-A-MOVE 3
Acclaim – *PSM31* – 9/10 – Puzzler
The most addictive two-player game this side of chocolate tennis.

BUST-A-MOVE 4
Acclaim – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Puzzler
No improvement on previous versions, but it's still a furiously addictive two-player game.

C

CARDINAL SYN
SCEE – *PSM33* – 6/10 – 3D Beat 'em up
Playing environment quite cool, but too easy and not much variety in character or location.

CARNAGE HEART
SCEE – *PSM20* – 8/10 – Combat strategy
Intensely absorbing and addictive, but mentally demanding. Not for the casual gamesplayer.

CASPER
SCEE – *PSM13* – 6/10 – Puzzle game
Cutesy exploration title with a few new twists, but little lasting appeal.

CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT
SCEE – *PSM26* – 7/10 – Platform adventure
Playable and vast, but lacking sparkle, and a mite 3D.

CHESSMASTER 3D
Mindscape – *PSM7* – 7/10 – Chess sim
Competent, nicely presented chess title with classical soundtrack.

CHEESY
Ocean – *PSM8* – 7/10 – Platformer
Old-fashioned and out-dated platform romp with unfortunate title.

CHILL
Eidos – *PSM32* – 6/10 – Snowboarding sim
Proficient snowboarding game, but it lacks anything innovative.

CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD
Psygnosis – *PSM7* – 5/10 – Adventure
Pretty for its day, but frustrating and poorly constructed Arthurian romp.

✪ CIRCUIT BREAKERS
Mindscape – *PSM33* – 9/10 – Racing game
Addictive, clever, considered top-down racing. Best with four players.

CITY OF LOST CHILDREN, THE
Psygnosis – *PSM17*– 3/10 – Adventure
An eccentric, good-looking adventure game that promises much but delivers nothing.

CLOCK TOWER
ASCII – *PSM26* – 4/10 – 3D adventure
Spectacularly dull adventuring.

✪ COLIN MCRAE RALLY
Codemasters – *PSM35* – 9/10 – Arcade racer/racing sim
A compulsory purchase for all motor racing fans.

COLONY WARS
Psygnosis – *PSM26* – 7/10 – 3D space combat
Stunning and well-designed, if you're prepared to make the effort.

✪ COLONY WARS – VENGEANCE
Psygnosis – *PSM39* – 9/10 – 3D space combat
A challenging and compelling space combat game.

✪ COMMAND & CONQUER
Virgin – *PSM15* – 9/10 – Military strategy
Brilliant conversion of the God-like PC original. Make war, not love.

COMMAND & CONQUER RED ALERT: RETALIATION
Virgin – *PSM37* – 7/10 – Real-time military strategy
Red Alert fans will lap it up, but anyone looking for anything new will be disappointed.

CONSTRUCTOR
Acclaim – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Management sim
You'll need a mouse to enjoy it, but its sheer depth is rivalled by too few other titles.

CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
Konami – *PSM15* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
Frustrating and cheap-looking blaster. Much too difficult for its own good.

COOL BOARDERS
SCEE – *PSM16* – 6/10 – Snowboarding sim
Interesting and amusing but a rushed attempt at a trendy sport.

COOL BOARDERS 2
SCEE – *PSM29* – 8/10 – Snowboarding sim
Detailed sports sim, supercool arcade racer and wish-fulfilment.

COOL BOARDERS 3
SCEE – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Snowboarding sim
It could have been indispensable. As it is, it's merely excellent.

COURIER CRISIS
BMG – *PSM27* – 6/10 – Bike 'em up
Loads of fun for half an hour, then utterly tedious.

✪ CRASH BANDICOOT
SCEE – *PSM10* – 9/10 – 3D platformer
A big, stylish and engrossing addition to a much abused genre.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2
SCEE – *PSM27* – 8/10 – 3D platformer
Less painful than the original, though more of the same. Still, pretty and great fun.

✪ CRASH BANDICOOT 3
SCEE – *PSM40* – 9/10 – 3D platformer
Crash's finest hour. Without question the best platformer on the PlayStation. Sheer brilliance.

CREATURE SHOCK
Data East – *PSM4* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
An FMV experiment which fails as both game and visual 'experience.'

CRIME KILLER
Interplay – *PSM35* – 4/10 – Racing/shoot 'em up
Unimaginative idea and very poor driving mechanics.

CRITICAL DEPTH
GTi – *PSM29* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
A decent-enough all-action game. Good fun on a rainy afternoon with some friends.

CRITICOM
Virgin – *PSM3* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
A challenging combat game that only reveals its depths with time.

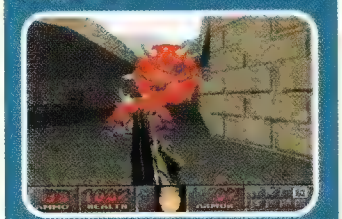
CROC
EA – *PSM25* – 7/10 – 3D platformer
Superb graphics and presentation. If only the level design was a little more imaginative...

CROW: CITY OF ANGELS, THE
Acclaim – *PSM16* – 5/10 – 3D adventure
Hopelessly out-of-date conversion of an equally poor film. Stay well away.

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE
EA – *PSM16* – 7/10 – Arcade adventure
The tricky controls and raw graphics conceal a challenging game.

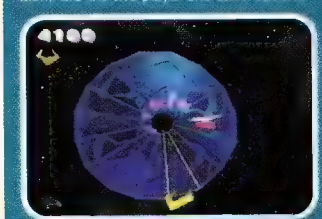
TOP FIVE
SHOOT 'EM UPS

DUKE NUKEM: TIME TO KILL
***PSM38* – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up/adventure**
We say: "A superb piece of well-crafted, videogame fun."



FINAL DOOM
***PSM13* – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up**
We say: "You can never get enough of this brilliant game."

POINT BLANK
***PSM32* – 7/10 – Shooting game**
We say: "Almost worth the asking price alone are the two-player and team options."

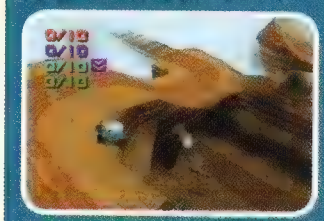


TEMPEST X
***PSM15* – 9/10 – Shoot 'em up**
We say: "This is one of the best shoot 'em ups created on any format."

TIME CRISIS
***PSM27* – 8/10 – 3D arcade shoot 'em up**
We say: "Welcome to the best shoot 'em up partnership since Smith and Wesson."

TOP FIVE RACERS/DRIVERS

COLIN MCRAE RALLY
PSM35 – 9/10 – Arcade racer/racing sim
We say: "Colin McRae Rally will require all your concentration and wit to defeat it."



CIRCUIT BREAKERS
PSM33 – 8/10 – Biddy racing game
We say: "THE GAME OF CHAMPIONS is by far the most popular office sport of the year."

GRAN TURISMO
PSM32 – 10/10 – Racing sim
We say: "Gran Turismo is the best racing game, ever."

TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
PSM27 – 9/10 – Racing sim
We say: "An excellent racing game that plays like a dream."

WIPEOUT 2097
PSM12 – 9/10 – Racing game
We say: "As a two-player game it has to score a maximum TEN – it's that great."

▶ **CRYPT KILLER**
Konami – *PSM18* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Adequate, but not exactly memorable conversion of an okay-ish arcade shooter.

CYBER SLED
SCEE – *PSM2* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
A poor conversion of a limited *Battle Zone*-style arcade game. Not to be recommended.

CYBER SPEED
Mindscape – *PSM2* – 3/10 – Futuristic racer
Wipeout - but dull and sadly pointless. The graphics are passable.

CYBERIA
Interplay – *PSM7* – 5/10 – 3D adventure
Pre-rendered storybook adventure which has always looks dated.

D

D
Acclaim – *PSM3* – 4/10 – Arcade adventure
A well-produced and engrossing experience which ends too quickly.

DARK FORCES
Virgin – *PSM17* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
A lazy, dated *Doom* clone. The force is certainly not strong in this one.

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT
EA – *PSM21* – 8/10 – Space blaster
Satisfying 3D shoot 'em up with a nod to *Elite* and bags of gameplay.

DARKSTALKERS
Virgin – *PSM12* – 7/10 – 2D beat 'em up
A sound enough beat 'em up but no *Street Fighter Alpha*.

DAVIS CUP TENNIS
Telstar – *PSM11* – 5/10 – Tennis sim
Moderately good-looking and speedy, but lacking in playability.

DEAD BALL ZONE
GTi – *PSM33* – 6/10 – Future sports
A decent playable future sports game at last, but not as good as the 16-bit classic, *Speedball*.

DEAD OR ALIVE
SCEE – *PSM34* – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Lots of polish and gameplay. Still secondary to *Tekken 3* and *Soul Blade*, though.

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
Eidos – *PSM31* – 8/10 – 3D adventure
Not a *Tomb Raider* beater, but a solid and well-designed 3D romp.

DEFCON 5
SCEE – *PSM3* – 8/10 – 3D action/strategy
Tense, atmospheric strategy-centred shooter. *Doom* with a brain.

DESCENT
Interplay – *PSM4* – 8/10 – 3D blaster
Surprisingly good conversion of a great PC title. Huge and addictive.

DESCENT 2
Interplay – *PSM21* – 7/10 – 3D blaster
An impressive sequel which suffered through comparison to rivals.

DESTRUCTION DERBY
Psygnosis – *PSM1* – 7/10 – Racing game
Exhilarating crash-and-smash racer let down by a few key faults.

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
A total visual and gameplay overhaul of the original title. Brilliant stuff, especially with a Platinum price tag.

DEVIL'S DECEPTION
ASCII – *PSM25* – 3/10 – Platform puzzler
In French 'deception' means disappointment. This game is most appropriately named.

DEVIL DICE
SCEE – *PSM20* – 7/10 – Puzzle game
A slightly eccentric puzzler that intrigues, frustrates and needs plenty of patience.

DIABLO
EA – *PSM33* – 6/10 – RPG/Arcade action
Fun blend of arcade action and RPG – easy to play but not the best Japan has to offer.

DIE HARD TRILOGY
EA – *PSM10* – 8/10 – Arcade adventure
Three good games for the price of one. Glitchy but good value.

DISCWORLD
Psygnosis – *PSM1* – 7/10 – Adventure
Tough point and click puzzler which captures Pratchett's humour well.

DISCWORLD 2: MISSING PRESUMED...?
Psygnosis – *PSM28* – 7/10 – Adventure
If you're a Pratchett fan, buy it now. If you're not, don't.

DISRUPTOR
Interplay – *PSM13* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Stunning scenery, slick looks and design. A great alternative to *Doom*.

DOOM
GTi – *PSM2* – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
The classic 3D blaster brought with spooky brilliance to the PlayStation.

DRAGONHEART
Acclaim – *PSM22* – 3/10 – Platformer
Dismal movie licence with bad 2D visuals and predictable gameplay.

DUKE NUKEM
GTi – *PSM28* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
An essential addition to your collection. Supreme one-player game.

DUKE NUKEM: TIME TO KILL
GTi – *PSM38* – 9/10 – 3D adventure
Delivers all the videogame goodies in one lovely bundle. A joy to play.

DYNASTY WARRIORS
Ocean – *PSM24* – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Lacks the frantic appeal of *Soul Blade* but still packs a punch.

E

EARTHWORM JIM 2
Virgin – *PSM11* – 6/10 – Platformer
Adds little to the genre, except a funny hero and cartoon graphics .

EPIDEMIC
SCEE – *PSM20* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
A number of clever touches lift this above standard *Doom*-clone fare out of the bloodthirsty pack.

ESPN EXTREME GAMES
SCEE – *PSM2* – 6/10 – Skate 'em up
Amusing but essentially limited *Road Rash*-alike which rapidly bores.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF
SCEE – *PSM34* – 9/10 – Golf game
Cute, well-packaged and highly desirable. A superb little game.

EXCALIBUR 2555AD
Telstar – *PSM18* – 7/10 – 3D adventure
Tolerable action adventure, overshadowed by *Tomb Raider*.

EXHUMED
BMG – *PSM18* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Challenging, Egyptian-themed shooter with nice engine and good graphics.

EXPLOSIVE RACING
JMI – *PSM24* – 6/10 – Racing game
A cartoon racer which tries hard to be different, sacrificing playability.

EXTREME PINBALL
EA – *PSM7* – 3/10 – Pinball sim
Atrociaous example of a not-that-good-at-the-best-of-times genre.

F

FADE TO BLACK
EA – *PSM8* – 8/10 – 3D adventure
Atmospheric adventure yarn which suffers a few niggling eccentricities.

FANTASTIC FOUR
Acclaim – *PSM27* – 4/10 – Beat 'em up
Cool licence, disappointing product.

FELONY 11-79
ASCII – *PSM26* – 7/10 – Racing game
Inadequate in many ways, but its entertainment value masks its flaws.

FIFA '97
EA – *PSM15* – 7/10 – Football sim
A fiddly game of football, remaining the worst of the *FIFA* games.

FIFA '99
EA – *PSM40* – 9/10 – Football sim
The pace and skill of the game has been married to one of the most instinctive control systems to date.

FIFA: ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP '98
EA – *PSM28* – 8/10 – Football sim
Supreme playability and smart graphics make this a surefire hit.

FIFA SOCCER '96
EA – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Football sim
Impressive at the time, but now rather stodgy and average-looking.

FIFTH ELEMENT, THE
SCEE – *PSM38* – 4/10 – 3D action
If the film lacked substance at least it had style, this has neither.

FIGHTING FORCE
Core – *PSM27* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Dated, yet initially fun title. Too little gameplay.

FINAL FANTASY VII
SCEE – *PSM26* – 10/10 – RPG
A brand new standard of excellence for the PlayStation. If you like RPGs, you'll love this.

FINAL DOOM
GTi – *PSM13* – 9/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
30 scary new levels and some visual improvements. About as essential as the first *Doom*.

FIRO & KLAWD
BMG – *PSM14* – 5/10 – Isometric blaster
Poorly designed and frustrating with (failed) comic overtones.

FLOATING RUNNER
THQ – *PSM14* – 6/10 – 3D platformer
Surreal, nausea-inducing *Mario 64* wannabee with a few good ideas that are a little too thinly spread.

FLUID
SCEE – *PSM36* – 7/10 – Interactive music
Relaxing post-club fare and otherworld experience. Nearing world peace and harmony.

FORMULA 1
Psygnosis – *PSM11* – 9/10 – Racing sim
A realistic and immensely playable racer. Essential.

FORMULA 1 '97
Psygnosis – *PSM24* – 9/10 – Racing sim
Superior in almost every regard to the 1996 original. A racing game landmark.

FORMULA 1 '98
Psygnosis – *PSM38* – 7/10 – Racing sim
F1 '98 is no better than *F1 '97*. It's also no better than *F1*.

FORMULA KARTS: SPECIAL EDITION
Telstar – *PSM27* – 7/10 – 3D racer
Great racer. Works well as a sim and as an arcade experience.

FORSAKEN
Acclaim – *PSM33* – 8/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Looks striking, pleasurable to play, but toughness and inadequate feel of your craft lets it down.

FRENZY
SCEE – *PSM35* – 3/10 – Flight shooter
Disappointing, repetitive, dated and boring. 'Nuff said?

FROGGER
Hasbro Interactive – *PSM25* – 5/10 – Platformer
Fancy new graphics don't make this silly old game any less mediocre.

FUTURE COP: LAPD
EA – *PSM38* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Surprisingly addictive. Two-player *and* single modes are excellent.

G

GALAXIAN3
Namco – *PSM10* – 4/10 – FMV Shoot 'em up

Namco takes one of its best titles and turns it into an FMV-fest. Why?

G-DARIUS
THQ – *PSM37* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Some good solid gameplay, but repetition and over-use of enemy firepower mar it somewhat.

GEX
BMG – *PSM4* – 7/10 – Platformer
Run-of-the-mill lizard-based jumper. Plenty of locations and tasks to keep you busy though.

GEX 3D: ENTER THE GECKO
BMG – *PSM32* – 8/10 – 3D platformer
Polished, handsome and entertaining. Lacking only in innovation.

GHOST IN THE SHELL
SCEE – *PSM33* – 7/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Manga-inspired with robo-spiders and oodles of explosions. Of course.

GOAL STORM
Konami – *PSM2* – 8/10 – Arcade football sim
Not as speedy as other arcade footie titles, but more intuitive and stylish.

G-POLICE
Psygnosis – *PSM25* – 9/10 – Flight sim/shooter
Intricate storyline, and some of the best dogfighting and flying gameplay.

GRAN TURISMO
SCEE – *PSM32* – 10/10 – Racing sim
Takes every other PlayStation racer and sends them squealing to the pits.

GRAND THEFT AUTO
BMG – *PSM28* – 8/10 – Criminal sim
Controversial with unimpressive grahics; nevertheless, playable, addictive and original.

GRID RUN
Virgin – *PSM21* – 4/10 – Maze/chase game
Painfully average hide and seek/'capture the flag' crossover. Ho hum.

GUNSHIP 2000
Microprose – *PSM8* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Immersive helicopter flight sim with engrossing, varied missions.

H

HARD BOILED
EA – *PSM24* – 4/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Falls short as both a flying experience and a shoot 'em up. Instantly forgettable.

HARDCORE 4X4
Gremlin – *PSM14* – 7/10 – Racing game
An original off-roader which suffers due to tight, restrictive courses.

HEART OF DARKNESS
Infogrames – *PSM34* – 7/10 – 2D adventure
Beautiful and cinematic, but with flawed gameplay.

HEBEREKE'S POPOITTO
Marubeni Sanki Corp – *PSM6* – 6/10 – Puzzle game
Japanese puzzler which fails to grab the attention like *Bust-A-Move 2*.

HERC'S ADVENTURES
Virgin Interactive – *PSM26* – 7/10 – RPG/platform puzzler
Entertaining intro to the RPG, though really a platform game with puzzles.

HERCULES
SCEE – *PSM41* – 6/10 – Platform adventure
A fun but short-lived experience that will appeal to younger players.

HEXEN
GT – *PSM19* – 6/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Sword and sorcery-inspired *Doom* shenanigans. Challenging but dated.

HI-OCTANE
EA – *PSM3* – 6/10 – Racing game
Another futuristic racer which tries to match *Wipeout* but doesn't.

HYPER TENNIS: FINAL MATCH
Microprose – *PSM22* – 2/10 – Sports sim
A poor man's *Pong* that plays as badly as it looks.

I

IMPACT RACING
JVC – *PSM9* – 5/10 – Driving/shooting sim
Limited arcade racer which excites initially, but soon becomes tiresome.

IN THE HUNT
THQ – *PSM7* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
Ye olde 2D shooter. Flawed and withered but challenging for a while.

INCREDIBLE HULK
Eidos Interactive – *PSM16* – 4/10 – Action adventure
Anger-inducing adventure/beat 'em up crossover.

INDEPENDENCE DAY
Fox Interactive – *PSM21* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
As tacky and inept as the film, but not half as much fun. Pointless.

INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
Konami – *PSM8* – 8/10 – Sports sim
Aching fingers aside, a bewilderingly addictive multiplayer sport frenzy.

INVASION
Microids – *PSM41* – 3/10 – Airborne blaster
This is one invasion that should definitely be repelled. Ignore if possible

IRON & BLOOD
Acclaim – *PSM15* – 5/10 – Beat 'em up
A clumsy, unresponsive attempt at a genre with many brighter moments.

IRON MAN
Acclaim – *PSM16* – 2/10 – Shoot 'em up
Tatty, repetitive, poorly programed monstrosity. Nothing but shovelware.

ISS DELUXE
Konami – *PSM15* – 8/10 – Football sim
Dated graphics try to ruin a very playable game and thankfully fail.

ISS PRO
Konami – *PSM19* – 9/10 – Football sim
Inconsistent yet immensely playable footie title. One of the finest.

ISS PRO '98
Konami – *PSM36* – 9/10 –Football sim
Unrivalled in its field. The best football sim available.

IZNOGOUD
LDA Distribution – *PSM31* – 2/10 – Platform/tat
This is possibly one of the worst games we have ever played. It *isnogood*. Heh.

J

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPER CROSS
Acclaim – *PSM35* – 6/10 – Motorbike racing
Let down by sub-arcade controls. Could have been a hit.

JERSEY DEVIL
Ocean – *PSM27* – 8/10 – Platformer
Nothing new, but huge, colourful and moreish.

JET RIDER
SCEE – *PSM17* – 7/10 – Racing game
A complex, quirky racer which lacks the sensationalism of *F1* or *Wipeout*.

JET RIDER 2
SCEE – *PSM30* – 8/10 – Racing game
Great bikes and physics, but the courses don't match its ambition.

JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE
US Gold – *PSM4* – 6/10 – Platformer
Patience-baiting platform title with enough charm to keep you playing.

JONAH LOMU RUGBY
Codemasters – *PSM19* – 7/10 – Rugby sim
Not as big as the man himself, but challenging if you can persevere.

JUDGE DREDD
Gremlin – *PSM27* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
Like many things in life it is fun, but is ultimately disappointing.

JUMPING FLASH
SCEE – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Platformer
Original stab at the platform genre which impresses unless you've played it to death.

JUMPING FLASH 2
SCEE – *PSM12* – 8/10 – Platformer
Better 3D visuals than the first, but still too easy.

JUPITER STRIKE
SCEE – *PSM5* – 5/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
A straightforward space blaster with few surprises and little variety.

K

K1 THE ARENA FIGHTERS
THQ – *PSM20* – 4/10 – Kickboxing sim
Frustratingly awkward controls make this a weak beat 'em up contender for the scrapping game title.

KENSEI: SACRED FIST
Konami – *PSM41* – 9/10 – Fighting game
Tekken 3 is still safe at the top of the scrapping heap, but this fighting game comes closest with great detail and depth.

KICK OFF 97
Maxis – *PSM24* – 6/10 – Football sim
Lacks the instinctive special touches that make a great footie sim – hence the nothing special score.

KICK OFF WORLD
Funsoft – *PSM33* – 3/10 – Footie game
Good idea to combine arcade footie action with management but this game fails.

KILEAK THE BLOOD
SCEE – *PSM1* – 4/10 – 3D maze blaster
Derivative gameplay mars this visually presentable maze effort,

KING'S FIELD
SCEE – *PSM19* – 8/10 – RPG
Horrible to look at, but an absorbing RPG. Plenty to keep you playing.

KLONOA: DOOR TO PHANTOMILE
Namco – *PSM32* – 7/10 – Platformer
Entertaining story, cutesy cutaways, but old-timers will whiz through it as it's just too easy.

KONAMI OPEN GOLF
Konami – *PSM22* – 5/10 – Golf sim
The lack of polish, innovation or fun made a judgement of deeply average for this average title pretty inevitable.

KNOCKOUT KINGS
EA – *PSM41* – 8/10 – Boxing sim
The top boxing sim at the moment, knocking out *Victory Boxing 2* in the last round.

KRAZY IVAN
Psygnosis – *PSM3* – 7/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
As slick as an, erm, oil slick but it sticks around for far less time.

KULA WORLD
SCEE – *PSM34* – 8/10 – Puzzler
Excellently crafted and original. The gameplay can sometimes be frustrating – but then that's probably the whole point.

KURUSHI
SCEE – *PSM24* – 8/10 – Puzzle game
What could be an enthralling mental workout is ultimately let down by nothing more than a below average two-player option.

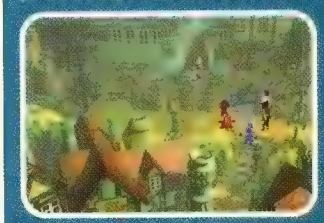
L

LEGEND
Funsoft – *PSM40* – 6/10 – Chop 'em up
Seasoned gamers may find it limiting but its purity has a certain beauty.

LEMMINGS 3D
SCEE – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Arcade puzzler

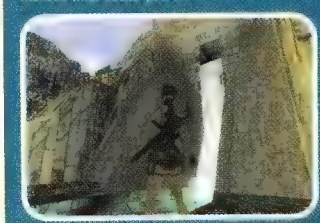
TOP FIVE ADVENTURES/RPGs

BROKEN SWORD
***PSM11* – 9/10 – Graphic adventure**
We say: "In terms of presentation, this game has a big-budget movie feel about it."



FINAL FANTASY VII
***PSM26* – 10/10 – RPG**
We say: "In the years to come they'll celebrate this as one of the all-time classics."

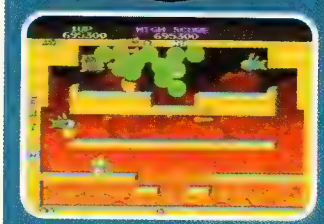
RESIDENT EVIL 2
***PSM31* – 9/10 – 3D adventure**
We say: "It's a terrifying tribute to horror movies that sucks you in."



TOMB RAIDER 3
***PSM40* – 10/10 – 3D adventure**
We say: "A wee bit too difficult for the casual gamer, but it is marvellous."

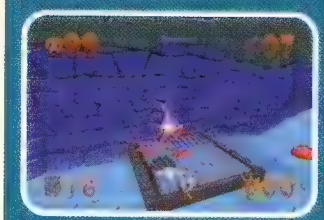
WILD ARMS
***PSM37* – 9/10 – RPG**
We say: "*Wild ARMS* is simply a superb role-playing game."

TOP FIVE PLATFORMERS

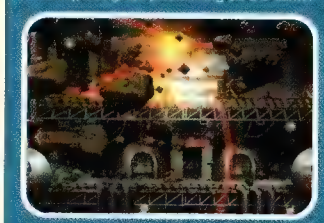


BUBBLE BOBBLE 2
PSM20 – 8/10 – Platformer
We say: "Enough of a challenge to keep even the most ardent gamer happy."

CRASH BANDICOOT 3
PSM40 – 9/10 – 3D platformer
We say: "A must for established *Crash* fans and newcomers alike."



JERSEY DEVIL
PSM27 – 8/10 – Platformer
We say: "Platforming the way it used to be certainly, but great platforming all the same."



ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSSEY
PSM24 – 9/10 – Platformer
We say: "This game redefines the humble platformer, dragging it up to new heights."

PANDEMONIUM
PSM14 – 9/10 – Platformer
We say: "Traditional elements have been blended to form a gamer's paradise."

The classic puzzle game given a 3D facelift for the 32-bit generation.

LEMMINGS COMPILATION
Psygnosis – *PSM39* – 7/10 – Puzzler
A classic that retains its charm. If you get hooked you'll keep playing.

LIBERO GRANDE
SCEE – *PSM40* – 7/10 – First-person football sim
Selfless sacrifice. *The* choice for the purer purist...

LIFE FORCE TENKA
Psygnosis – *PSM18* – 6/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Monotonous gameplay, incoherent design. A bit dull, in other words.

LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE
EA – *PSM19* – 6/10 – Arcade adventure
Visually charming but deeply flawed. A bit of a shame really.

LOADED
Gremlin – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Marvellous lighting effects and frantic action, but soon gets repetitive.

LONE SOLDIER
Telstar – *PSM3* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
An annoying control system lets down this mildly addictive blaster.

LOST VIKINGS 2
Gremlin – *PSM19* – 7/10 – Platformer
Old-fashioned multi-character puzzler. Still playable, even now.

LOST WORLD
EA – *PSM24* – 3/10 – Platformer
Looks lovely, but the odd controls and often poor level design annoy.

LUCKY LUKE
Infogrames – *PSM33* – 6/10 – Platformer
Fun children's title, plenty to look at and levels are interesting, not much for older folk.

M

MACHINE HUNTER
Eidos – *PSM22* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Inviting *Gauntlet* clone which doesn't break much new ground, but it's a lot of fun anyway.

MADDEN '97
EA – *PSM11* – 8/10 – American football sim
A fine title in the *Madden* series and a great sim in its own right.

MADDEN '98
EA – *PSM26* – 8/10 – American football sim
Even better than the last. A worthy American football sim – despite the disappointing graphics.

MADDEN NFL '99
EA – *PSM38* – 8/10 – American football sim
The American football game that will appeal to anyone. The best yet.

MAGIC CARPET
EA – *PSM5* – 8/10 – Adventure
Bullfrog's typical originality and flare triumph again. An absorbing treat.

MARVEL SUPER HEROES
EA – *PSM28* – 8/10 – 2D beat 'em up
2D beat 'em ups live! At last, a decent comics title for the PlayStation.

MAXIMUM FORCE
GTi – *PSM29* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
Shoddy, derivative, tired, poor value, not to mention frustrating...

MDK
Interplay – *PSM27* – 8/10 – Third-person blaster
Intelligent and fun blaster, with the occasional graphical frailty.

MECHWARRIOR 2
Activision – *PSM18* – 9/10 – 3D combat strategy
Gripping PC conversion which ups the action ante with great effect.

MEDIEVIL
SCEE – *PSM38* – 7/10 – 3D adventure
A lot of imagination. Plenty to enjoy, but you'll get frustrated too.

MEGAMAN BATTLE & CHASE
Ocean – *PSM25* – 3/10 – Cartoon racer
Basically just a rip-off of *Mario's Kart*. Good fun for a short while.

MEGAMAN 8
Ocean – *PSM25* – 3/10 – Platformer
Amiable enough, but not innovative. A mere nostalgic trip.

MEN IN BLACK
Gremlin – *PSM35* – 4/10 – 3D adventure
Dull, drab, slow and frustrating. Avoid avoid avoid.

MICHAEL OWEN'S WLS '99
EIDOS – *PSM41* – 8/10 – Football sim
Not a football sim championship contender. But a worthy mid-table outfit that merits perseverance.

MICKEY'S WILD ADVENTURE
SCEE – *PSM41* – 7/10 – Platformer
Not particularly wild or indeed adventurous, but fun nevertheless.

MICRO MACHINES V3
Codemasters – *PSM18* – 9/10 – Racing game
Cute, addictive racing action with almost never-ending appeal. Highly recommended.

MK MYTHOLOGIES: SUB-ZERO
Midway – *PSM29* – 1/10 – beat 'em up
Scrolling beat 'em up and a strong contender for the worst game ever.

MK TRILOGY
GTi – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Fun fisticuffs, bullied out of the playground by the likes of *Tekken*.

MONKEY HERO
Take Two Interactive – *PSM41* – 7/10 Arcade adventure/RPG
A little too simple for the average gamer but will appeal to youngsters.

MONSTER TRUCKS
Psygnosis – *PSM17* – 6/10 – Racing game
The lack of true driving feel makes this more mouse than monster.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3
GTi – *PSM2* – 9/10 – Beat 'em up
An admittedly fun conversion now suffers in comparison to *Tekken*.

MORTAL KOMBAT 4
GTi – *PSM36* – 5/10 – Beat 'em up
The same old stuff trotted out with a fresh coat of pixels. Tedious.

MOTO RACER
EA – *PSM26* – 8/10 – Motorbike racer
Gets the adrenaline pumping, and keeps it flowing.

MOTO RACER 2
EA – *PSM39* – 7/10 – Motorbike racer
Let down by many niggles and annoyances. Good, but not great.

MOTOR MASH
Ocean – *PSM27* – 6/10 – Driving game
Pace, sense of humour and overall quality but from an old idea.

MOTOR TOON GP2
SCEE – *PSM12* – 8/10 – Racing game
Gorgeous visuals and a wealth of courses. Shaky handling.

MOTORHEAD
Gremlin – *PSM32* – 8/10 – Arcade racing game
A true adrenaline rush of a game, with a bundle of interesting ideas.

MR DOMINO
JVC – *PSM34* – 8/10 – Puzzler
Unusual hero, unusual gameplay. A highly rewarding title.

MUSIC: MUSIC CREATION FOR THE PLAYSTATION
Codemasters – *PSM40* – 9/10 – Music creation
Hundreds of hip loops and demos to fiddle with. An excellent game.

MYST
Acclaim – *PSM4* – 7/10 – Adventure
A game for thinkers. Luscious visuals and an engrossing storyline.

N

N2O
Gremlin – *PSM35* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Unadventurous and uninspiring, but essentially quite entertaining.

NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS
Konami – *PSM31* – 6/10 – Sports sim
Rushed to get it out in time for the actual event? Dull, uninspiring.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 1
Namco – *PSM5* – 7/10 – Retro games collection
Arcade-perfect collection of seminal coin-op hits. Crude but fascinating.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 2
Namco – *PSM14* – 6/10 – Retro games collection
The likes of *Gaplus* and *Xevious* get the conversion treatment. A bit stale.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 3
Namco – *PSM15* – 6/10 – Retro games collection
Only *Galaxian* and *Phozon* stand out in this coin-op history trawl.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 4
Namco – *PSM23* – 4/10 – Retro games collection
The penultimate title in the series sees only *Ordyne* still truly shining.

NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 5
Namco – *PSM26* – 4/10 – Retro games collection
Weaker than previous offerings but plenty of detail for the obsessives.

NANOTEK WARRIOR
Virgin – *PSM19* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
A little variation and a few more levels wouldn't have gone amiss.

NASCAR RACING
Sierra – *PSM14* – 4/10 – Racing game
Crusty serious driving sim which seriously fails to convince.

NASCAR '98
EA – *PSM27* – 6/10 – Racer
An improvement over *NASCAR*, but still weighed down by poor handling and niggly faults.

NASCAR '99
EA – *PSM39* – 5/10 – Racer
Tedious course design – just plain dull.

NBA HANGTIME
GTi – *PSM29* – 5/10 – Basketball game
Competent enough, but so are all the rest. We demand better.

NBA IN THE ZONE
Konami – *PSM4* – 6/10 – Basketball sim
Moderately playable dribble 'em up. Okay, but *Total NBA* flattens it.

NBA: IN THE ZONE 2
Konami – *PSM16* – 8/10 – Basketball sim
A clear improvement in graphics, gameplay and realism.

NBA JAM EXTREME
Acclaim – *PSM14* – 7/10 – Basketball sim
Similar to the *Tournament Edition* in all but the smart new 3D visuals.

NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION
Acclaim – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Basketball sim
Dodgy-looking but admittedly fast and playable coin-op hoop shooter.

NBA LIVE '96
EA – *PSM6* – 7/10 – Basketball sim
A moderately competent sim mixing realism with arcade acrobatics.

NBA LIVE '97
EA – *PSM15* – 7/10 – Basketball sim
A convincing sim that strays into management territory.

NBA LIVE '98
EA – *PSM28* – 8/10 – Basketball sim
Another year, another swanky EA update. Try turning it off: you can't.

NBA LIVE '99
EA – *PSM41* – 8/10 – Basketball sim
You can't beat this latest basketball sim from the EA Sports stable.

NBA PRO '98
Konami – *PSM31* – 7/10 – Sports sim
Finely balanced sim that'll provide hours of entertainment.

NEED FOR SPEED
EA – *PSM5* – 8/10 – Racing game
Rough-around-the-edges racer with an undeniably high fun factor.

NEED FOR SPEED 2
EA – *PSM20* – 5/10 – Racing game
Includes all the faults of the first title, but removes the fun element.

NEED FOR SPEED 3: HOT PURSUIT

EA – *PSM33* – 7/10 – Racing game
Great if you love car chases, with the added bonus of an excellent two-player mode.

NEWMAN HAAS RACING
Psygnosis – *PSM31* – 8/10 – Racing sim
A great Indy Car adaptation of Psygnosis' *F1* engine.

NFL BLITZ
GTi – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Arcade American football
One of the most addictive, playable and just plain fun sports games to appear in a long time.

NFL GAMEDAY
SCEE – *PSM6* – 7/10 – US Football sim
The first American football game on the PlayStation. Good fun, too.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '97
Acclaim – *PSM16* – 8/10 – US football sim
A smart interpretation of American football that tries nothing new.

NFL XTREME
SCEE – *PSM39* – 6/10 – US football sim
Fun for one and two players, but not quite extreme enough for us.

NHL '97
EA – *PSM13* – 8/10 – Ice hockey sim
A playable and visually superb hockey sim from EA.

NHL '98
EA – *PSM26* – 9/10 – Ice hockey sim
Simply fantastic graphics, gameplay and sound.

NHL '99
EA – *PSM39* – 8/10 – Ice hockey sim
Still the king of the sticks, but more clever and violent.

NHL FACE OFF
SCEE – *PSM6* – 7/10 – Ice hockey sim
A worthy addition to the diminutive ice hockey genre. Exciting and fun.

NHL FACE OFF '97
SCEE – *PSM18* – 6/10 – Ice hockey sim
Not much better than the first title, which makes it look a touch dated.

NHL OPEN ICE
GTi – *PSM29* – 3/10 – Ice hockey sim
A veritably lamentable title. Avoid at all and any cost.

NHL POWERPLAY HOCKEY '96
Virgin – *PSM20* – 7/10 – Ice hockey sim
A sprinkling of faults spoil this otherwise sturdy and playable effort.

NIGHTMARE CREATURES
SCEE – *PSM25* – 6/10 – Action adventure
Poor controls, inefficient camera views and a sloppy combat system spoil this game.

NINJA: SHADOW OF DARKNESS
Eidos – *PSM37* – 6/10 – 3D fighting adventure
Competent but stodgy, and feels rather rushed. Experienced gamers will soon tire of it.

NOVASTORM
Psygnosis – *PSM2* – 3/10 – Shoot 'em up
A brain-dead attempt to re-capture the 2D shoot 'em up.

NOTE, THE
Sunsoft – *PSM29* – 2/10 – 3D
An incredibly poor game. It isn't scary and it isn't fun.

NUCLEAR STRIKE
Virgin – *PSM24* – 7/10 – Strategy shooter
An intriguing and varied 'copter sim, blemished by a few key faults.

O

ODDWORLD: ABE'S EXODDUS
GTi – *PSM39* – 8/10 – Platformer
An enchanting game, but a bit too close to its predecessor.

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSSEY
GTi – *PSM24* – 9/10 – Platformer
Lovely to look at and chock-a-block with great ideas. An absolute joy.

O.D.T.
Psygnosis – *PSM40* – 8/10 – 3D adventure
A decent game with a fresh plot, but not very user-friendly – initially.

OFF WORLD INTERCEPTOR EXTREME
BMG – *PSM4* – 5/10 – Driving game
Tries to combine the shoot 'em up and the racer and fluffs both.

OLYMPIC GAMES
US Gold – *PSM9* – 5/10 – Sports sim
Stumbles over the finishing line way behind *International Track & Field*.

OLYMPIC SOCCER
US Gold – *PSM8* – 7/10 – Football sim
A realistic but accessible attempt at the footie genre. Plenty of depth.

ONE
ASC Games – *PSM30* – 6/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Frantic, thrilling, gorgeous, thought-provoking, but too damn small...

ONSIDE SOCCER
Telstar – *PSM13* – 4/10 – Football/management sim
Attempts to offer management and a kickabout but fails on both counts.

OVERBLOOD
EA – *PSM21* – 6/10 – 3D adventure
An atmospheric opening gives way to an uninspiring adventure game directly after.

OVERBOARD!
Psygnosis – *PSM26* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up/puzzler
Bonkers sail 'em up with a duff save system. Nice cod piece anyway.

P

PANDEMONIUM
BMG – *PSM14* – 9/10 – Platformer
Gorgeous-looking cutey of a platform romp. Derivative, but huge fun. A classic game.

PANDEMONIUM 2
BMG – *PSM27* – 8/10 – Platformer
Not the beast that its predecessor was, but still a gas. Buy the original before you buy this.

PANZER GENERAL
Mindscape – *PSM4* – 8/10 – Strategy wargame
The hoary hexagonal graphics may deter many from this playable title.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER
SCEE – *PSM23* – 8/10 – Rap 'em up
Undoubtedly one of the most original computer games ever.

PAX CORPUS
Cryo – *PSM33* – 2/10 – 3D adventure
Tomb Raider in space. Only crap.

PEAK PERFORMANCE
EA – *PSM30* – 6/10 – Racing sim
Ambitious but let down by the average game engine and graphics.

PENNY RACERS
SCEE – *PSM14* – 5/10 – Racing game
Cutesy racer which lacks that elusive driving feel. Abundantly average.

PERFECT WEAPON
EA – *PSM16* – 4/10 – 3D adventure
The weapon may be perfect, but the outmoded and slow game isn't.

PET IN TV
SCEE – *PSM38* – 5/10 – Tamagotchi game
Too tedious for kids, and too unrewarding for adults.

PGA TOUR '96
EA – *PSM2* – 8/10 – Golf sim
A well-produced and thoroughly addictive golfing experience.

PGA TOUR '97
EA – *PSM12* – 7/10 – Golf sim
Offers more of the same, but is still a top-of-the-range golf game.

PGA TOUR GOLF '98
EA – *PSM28* – 7/10 – Golf sim
Worth a look if you don't have any of the series; but not worth upgrading.

PHAT AIR EXTREME SNOWBOARDING
Funsoft – *PSM36* – 5/10 – Snowboarding simulation
Jerky and disjointed controls provide little game satisfaction.

PHILOSOMA
SCEE – *PSM4* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
A jack of all shoot 'em up trades which proves a master of none.

PITBALL
Time Warner – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Futuristic sports sim
Difficult to get into but becomes fun with perseverence.

PITFALL 3D: BEYOND THE JUNGLE
Activision – *PSM32* – 7/10 – 3D platformer
A good, solid platformer that makes admirable use of the third dimension. Not for the easily frustrated.

PLAYER MANAGER
Anco – *PSM14* – 2/10 – Sports sim
The first footie management game, but it deserves to be relegated.

PO'ED
Interplay – *PSM7* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
Glitchy 3D conversion with a few good ideas but nowhere to put them.

POCKET FIGHTER
Virgin – *PSM38* – 8/10 – 2D beat 'em up
Proof that 2D beat 'em ups are actually a worthy alternative to polygonal pugilism.

POINT BLANK
Namco – *PSM32* – 7/10 – Shooting game
Not as technically impressive as *Time Crisis*, but provides the same compulsive gameplay.

POOL SHARK
Gremlin – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Pool sim
Successfully manufactures angle, pace, position and tactics. Pot on.

PORSCHE CHALLENGE
SCEE – *PSM19* – 8/10 – Racing game
Combines the exhilaration of an arcade jaunt with the realism of a sim.

POWERBOAT RACING
Interplay – *PSM34* – 5/10 – Racing sim
Tricky to play with jerky graphics.

POWER MOVE PRO WRESTLING
Activision – *PSM14* – 4/10 – Wrestling sim
Lacks thrills and depth.

POWER SERVE TENNIS
Ocean – *PSM2* – 3/10 – Tennis sim
It couldn't be worse if Cliff Richard sang in between games.

POY POY
Konami – *PSM31* – 7/10 – Multiplayer arcade game
Solo mode lacks spirit, but play it with friends and it won't disappoint.

PREMIER MANAGER '98
Gremlin – *PSM33* – 7/10 – Footie management sim
The PlayStation is still waiting for a great football management sim.

PRIMAL RAGE
Time Warner Interactive – *PSM5* – 5/10 – Beat 'em up
Novelty dinosaur beat 'em up. Nice animation conceals extinct gameplay. Expect a sequel soon.

PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK
Empire – *PSM30* – 7/10 – Pinball simulation
Best PS pinball sim to date, if too familiar and too expensive.

PRO PINBALL – THE WEB
Empire – *PSM9* – 7/10 – Pinball sim
Only offers one table, but sure plays a mean pinball anyway.

PROJECT OVERKILL
Konami – *PSM12* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Sci-fi blast 'em all over the shop title with guns and gore aplenty.

PROJECT X2
Ocean – *PSM15* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Self-consciously old skool 2D blaster. Still good for pent-up aggression.

PSYBADEK
Psygnosis – *PSM40* – 4/10 Yoof game
Neither big nor clever. It tries to be the next hip hit and falls well short of the mark.

TOP FIVE BEAT 'EM UPS

MORTAL KOMBAT 3
***PSM2* – 9/10 – Beat 'em up**
We say: "This is a fully developed, spot-on conversion of a massive arcade game."

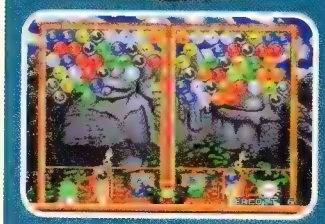
SOUL BLADE
***PSM19* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up**
We say: "You can't fail to have fun with this game and it's heartily recommended."

STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS ALPHA
***PSM25* – 9/10 – Beat 'em up**
We say: "It's the most fun we've ever had with streetfighting."

TEKKEN 2
***PSM11* – 10/10 – Beat 'em up**
We say: "No other game has characters who move with such delightful, fluid ease."

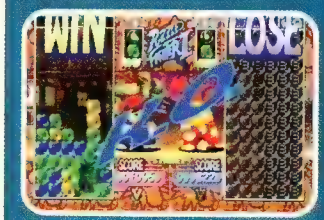
TEKKEN 3
***PSM36* – 10/10 – Beat 'em up**
We say: "This is a game for players who have time, skill and determination."

TOP FIVE STRATEGY/PUZZLERS



BUST A MOVE 2
PSM8 – 9/10 – Puzzle game
We say: "Quite possibly the most [illegible] game in the history of all things."

COMMAND & CONQUER
PSM15 – 9/10 – Military strategy
We say: "It may not be perfect, but it's not too far off."



SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2
PSM20 – 9/10 – Puzzle game
We say: "One of the most addictive puzzlers ever to appear on any console."

SYNDICATE WARS
PSM21 – 9/10 – Strategy action
We say: "It's a game for serious [illegible] which challenges your brain."

WARCRAFT 2
PSM22 – 9/10 – Combat sim
We say: "If you're interested in something with a little depth and detail, this is it."

PSYCHIC DETECTIVE
EA – *PSM6* – 5/10 – FMV adventure
Interactive movie with the emphasis firmly on movie. Fun for a while.

PSYCHIC FORCE
Acclaim – *PSM20* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Standard stuff – apart from a truly bizarre floaty combat system that is.

R

RAGE RACER
Namco – *PSM21* – 9/10 – Racing game
Fabulous (possibly the finest) arcade racer with perfectly tuned gameplay and slick visuals.

RAGING SKIES
Warner – *PSM10* – 6/10 – Combat flight sim
Graphically impressive at the time, but lacking in innovative touches.

RAIDEN
Ocean – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Seminal arcade blast brought home with accuracy. Dated, yes, but fun.

RALLY CROSS
SCEE – *PSM21* – 7/10 – Racing game
Immensely frustrating at first, but does offer a considerable challenge.

RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR
GTi – *PSM29* – 5/10 – Arcade conversion
A fairly decent game, but every level is the same as the rest.

RAPID RACER
SCEE – *PSM25* – 6/10 – 3D racing game
Well-designed but more of a novelty than a thrilling racing experience.

RAPID RELOAD
SCEE – *PSM1* – 5/10 – Platform shooter
Short-lived arcade 'walk and shoot' title. A fun but quick blast.

RASCAL
Psygnosis – *PSM31* – 5/10 – 3D platformer
Untaxing, insipid, uninspiring and impossible to control.

RAY STORM
Virgin – *PSM23* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Fast, furious vertical scroller. Leaves the player breathless, but feeling ul'mately unfulfilled.

RAY TRACER
SCEE – *PSM21* – 7/10 – Racing game
A fine arcade-style experience, which doesn't last long enough at home.

RAYMAN
UbiSoft – *PSM1* – 7/10 – Platformer
Nice to look at, challenging yet ever-so-slightly awkward platform affair.

REBEL ASSAULT 2
Virgin – *PSM21* – 2/10 – Flight shoot 'em up
Disastrous 'blink and you've completed it' *Star Wars* shocker.

REBOOT: COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS
EA – *PSM32* – 7/10 – 3D shoot 'em up
Atmospheric scenario and interesting control system lend weight, but we've seen it all before.

RED ALERT
Virgin – *PSM28* – 9/10 – Real-time wargame
A mammoth game. A classic. You must own this.

RELOADED
Gremlin – *PSM15* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
Mindless fun for a time, but the new puzzles fail to puzzle for long.

RESIDENT EVIL
Virgin – *PSM8* – 9/10 – 3D adventure
Chilling, blood-drenched action mixed with fiendish puzzles. A real horror legend.

RESIDENT EVIL 2
Virgin – *PSM31* – 9/10 – 3D adventure
A classic game that's every bit the equal of its illustrious predecessor. Not long, but great.

RESIDENT EVIL: DIRECTOR'S CUT
Virgin – *PSM28* – 8/10 – 3D adventure
A jazzed-up re-release; buy it only if you don't have the original. Soon to get a Dual Shock update.

RESURRECTION: RISE 2
Acclaim – *PSM6* – 4/10 – Beat 'em up
A very sorry robot punch-up which offers nothing new or exciting.

RETURN FIRE
Time Warner – *PSM10* – 7/10 – Arcade war game
Brilliant two-player, head-to-head blast, with a touch of tactical depth.

REVOLUTION X
Acclaim – *PSM6* – 2/10 – Shoot 'em up
A waste of code. Who'd want to save Aerosmith from terrorists anyway?

RIDGE RACER
Namco – *PSM1* – 9/10 – Racing game
The quintessential PlayStation racer. Smooth, playable, unforgettable.

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION
Namco – *PSM6* – 8/10 – Racing game
Improves the visuals a little, adds a couple of new features, and that's it.

RIOT
Psygnosis – *PSM15* – 7/10 – Sports sim
Futuristic basketball derivative. More of a scuffle than a riot.

RISK
Hasbro – *PSM28* – 6/10 – Boardgame
A game saved by its Ultimate Risk option. Not worth the asking price.

RIVAL SCHOOLS
Virgin – *PSM40* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up
One step nearer to *Tekken 3*. Perfectly balanced gameplay, excellent two-player mode.

ROAD RAGE
Konami – *PSM16* – 5/10 – Racing sim
Yet another dodgy *Wipeout* clone which fails to generate either tension or excitement.

ROAD RASH 3D
EA – *PSM34* – 7/10 – 3D racing/fighting game
Above-average arcady racer. Definitely a matter of taste.

ROAD RASH
EA – *PSM3* – 6/10 – Bike racing game
Formulaic racer that sounds like a medical complaint but is less fun to get hold of.

ROCK AND ROLL RACING 2
Interplay – *PSM36* – 4/10 – Futuristic racer
Insipid, hollow, soleless fare. Brain implodingly frustrating. Horrid.

ROBO PIT
THQ – *PSM13* – 4/10 – Arena combat
An interesting 'build your own fighter' idea is ruined by dull gameplay.

ROBOTRON X
GTi – *PSM13* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Provides 20 minutes of action-packed fun before getting boring.

ROGUE TRIP
GTi – *PSM39* – 6/10 – Driving blaster
Predictable gameplay and let down by the handling of the vehicles.

ROSCO MCQUEEN
SCEE – *PSM27* – 7/10 – 3D shooter
Won't make your jaw drop, but it oozes playability.

R-TYPES
Virgin – *PSM37* – 8/10 – Retro blaster
Flaming great. If you know who Jason King is you'll think this is fab.

RUSHDOWN
Infogames – *PSM41* – 3/10 – Extreme sports racer
More down and out than down-hill. This racer is a bit of a non-starter.

S

SAMPRAS EXTREME TENNIS
Codemasters – *PSM9* – 7/10 – Tennis sim
Good but not brilliant tennis sim lacking the oomph of a true classic.

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH
GTi – *PSM37* – 4/10 – Arcade driving
Forget this and buy a decent racer. There are plenty around.

S.C.A.R.S.
UbiSoft – *PSM36* – 8/10 – Racing
A great racing game that will give *Circuit Breakers* a run for its money.

SENTINEL RETURNS
Psygnosis – *PSM36* – 5/10 – No idea!
A sadly flawed version of one of the gaming industry's few truly original titles from olden times.

SENTIENT
Psygnosis – *PSM18* – 7/10 – 3D adventure
A fascinating, in-depth experience marred by the frustrating controls.

SHADOW MASTER
Core – *PSM29* – 5/10 – First-person shoot 'em up
If *Doom*'s not pretty enough for you, maybe you'd prefer this balls-out blastfest. Then again...

SHADOW GUNNER
UbiSoft – *PSM41* – 6/10 – Mech combat
A straightforward action shoot 'em up with robots. But lacks anything sensational.

SHELLSHOCK
Core – *PSM5* – 7/10 – Shoot 'em up
It's tanks, big guns and mindless destruction ahoy in this Core blaster.

SHOCK WAVE ASSAULT
EA – *PSM3* – 5/10 – 3D shooter
Easy-to-get-the-hang-of blaster which proves too simple to truly impress.

SIM CITY 2000
Maxis – *PSM11* – 7/10 – Strategy
Poor looks and addictive gameplay clash in this 'build a town' classic.

SKULL MONKEYS
EA – *PSM30* – 7/10 – 2D platformer
Polished and playable, but ultimately repetitive.

SLAM 'N' JAM '96
BMG – *PSM9* – 5/10 – Basketball sim
Offers an alright-ish one-player mode, but is overshadowed by finer titles.

SLAMSCAPE
MTV Interactive – *PSM18* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Flat, barren uninspiring blaster which thinks it's original. But it isn't.

SMALL SOLDIERS
EA – *PSM40* – 5/10 – Movie tie-in
Nothing to do with the film and a very limp game in its own right.

SMASH COURT TENNIS
Namco – *PSM14* – 6/10 – Tennis sim
Colourful and quaint, but too slow and fiddly for today's gamer.

SNOW RACER
Ocean – *PSM32* – 8/10 – Winter sports sim
Excellent combination of skiing and snowboarding.

SOCCER '97
Eidos – *PSM20* – 6/10 – Football sim
Rollicking end-to-end action slightly compromised by poor visuals.

SOUL BLADE
Namco – *PSM19* – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Great weapon-based fighter which slaps the ruddy face of *Toshinden*.

SOVIET STRIKE
EA – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Combat flight sim
It's short and unoriginal but offers an addictive blast while it lasts.

SPACE HULK
EA – *PSM9* – 8/10 – 3D action/adventure
Atmospheric sci-fi jaunt requiring strategic thought.

SPAWN: THE ETERNAL
SCEE – *PSM33* – 4/10 – Adventure/beat 'em up
A disappointment. It lacks engaging and absorbing gameplay and visuals.

SPEEDSTER
Psygnosis – *PSM19* – 5/10 – Racing game
Refreshingly different, but lacks the necessary speed and drive.

SPICE WORLD
SCEE – *PSM35* – 4/10 – Magazine/game hybrid
Rushed-out, non-game. Only for dedicated fans.

SPIDER
BMG – *PSM20* – 7/10 – Platformer
A novel lead character and brilliant controls mask a samey platformer.

SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD
Virgin – *PSM17* – 5/10 – Platformer

Ugly isometric effort which forgets all the lovable platform traditions.

SPYRO THE DRAGON
SCEE – *PSM39* – 8/10 – Platformer
Charming and polished only spoiled by a lack of challenge early on.

STAR GLADIATOR
Virgin – *PSM14* – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Typically accessible yet tactically diverse Capcom fighter.

STAR WARS: MASTERS OF TERAS KASI
Virgin – *PSM32* – 6/10 – Beat 'em up
A beat 'em up sheep in *Star Wars* clothing. Enjoyable but not perfect.

STARBLADE ALPHA
SCEE/Namco – *PSM2* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
A pleasant-looking, but samey space blaster, lacking long-term appeal.

STARFIGHTER 3000
Telstar – *PSM9* – 5/10 – Space combat
The tough flight model and mediocre graphics hinder an adequate game.

STARWINDER
Mindscape – *PSM12* – 4/10 – Space racing game
A smooth engine but the control is fiddly. Stick with the *Wipeout* games.

STEEL HARBINGER
Mindscape – *PSM13* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Mildly entertaining shoot 'em up masquerading as a strategy game.

STEEL REIGN
SCEE – *PSM29* – 5/10 – Tank shoot 'em up
Outstandingly average.

STREAK
GTi – *PSM40* – 6/10 – Future boarding
Potential spoilt by awkward controls and lack of finish. Disappointing.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA
Virgin – *PSM5* – 8/10 – 2D beat 'em up
Proof that there's room for 2D tussling on the PlayStation.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2
Virgin – *PSM13* – 8/10 – 2D beat 'em up
More proof that there's room for 2D tussling on the PlayStation.

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION
Virgin – *PSM30* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up
Despite being a bit of a missed opportunity, *SFC* is a little slice of gaming history.

✪ STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS ALPHA
Virgin – *PSM25* – 9/10 – 3D beat 'em up
If you enjoyed the *SF2* titles, this game will seem like a second honeymoon.

STREET FIGHTER: THE MOVIE
Virgin – *PSM1* – 6/10 – Beat 'em up
Easily the worst title in the otherwise prestigious *SF* series.

STREET RACER
UbiSoft – *PSM13* – 7/10 – Racing game
Polished cartoon graphics and honest gameplay mark this racer out.

STRIKEPOINT: THE HEX MISSIONS
Elite – *PSM16* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Fast and exciting, but lacks the satisfying complexity of its rivals.

STRIKER '96
Time Warner – *PSM2* – 6/10 – Football sim
Like its commentator, Andy Gray, this game is fun but deeply flawed.

SUIKODEN
Konami – *PSM15* – 7/10 – RPG
Histrionic Japanese RPG malarky. Recommended for the converted.

SUPER FOOTBALL CHAMP
Mindscape – *PSM28* – 3/10 – Football sim
Makes The Beautiful Game seem like an ugly accident.

SUPER MATCH SOCCER
Acclaim – *PSM36* – 2/10 – Football game
For all-round crapness, no other footie game can touch it.

SUPER PANG COLLECTION
Ocean – *PSM24* – 6/10 – Retro collection
Three addictive old arcade puzzlers. Mildly taxing for a short while.

✪ SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2
Virgin – *PSM20* – 9/10 – Puzzle game
Fans of puzzles will find this mad *Puyo Puyo* clone close to perfect.

SUPERSONIC RACERS
Mindscape – *PSM11* – 8/10 – Racing game
Ultra-competitive eight-player cartoon racer. Cute and playful.

SWAGMAN
Core – *PSM20* – 6/10 – Arcade adventure
Tries hard to please, but controls are far too frustrating. A damn shame.

✪ SYNDICATE WARS
EA – *PSM21* – 9/10 – Strategy action
A superbly atmospheric, dark and challenging title. Not to be missed.

✪ TEKKEN
Namco – *PSM2* – 9/10 – 3D beat 'em up
A masterpiece: instrumental in the early success of the PlayStation.

✪ TEKKEN 2
Namco – *PSM11* – 10/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Simply the perfect beat 'em up. Full of great fighters, moves and visuals.

✪ TEKKEN 3
Namco – *PSM36* – 10/10 – It's Tekken!
The best fighting game in the world. Totally without equal.

✪ TEMPEST X
Interplay – *PSM15* – 9/10 – Shoot 'em up
Tough, smooth, nippy and above all legendary blaster. Intensely exciting.

TENCHU
Activision – *PSM38* – 7/10 – Slash 'em up
Enjoyable but limited. Rough and unfinished but serviceable.

TENNIS ARENA
UbiSoft – *PSM28* – 7/10 – Tennis sim
Beautifully animated and imaginative. A worthy addition to the PS tennis-playing family.

TEST DRIVE 4
EA – *PSM28* – 7/10 – Racing game
Gorgeous-looking, fast and fun, but it lacks depth.

TEST DRIVE 4X4
EA – *PSM40* – 7/10 – Arcade off-road racing
It can be fun, but ultimately lacks the depth of more serious competition.

TETRIS PLUS
JVC – *PSM26* – 6/10 – Puzzle game
Sound enough, but few surprises.

TEST DRIVE: OFF ROAD
EA – *PSM23* – 6/10 – Racing game
The one-player game is okay, but the two-player option is poorly designed.

TEST DRIVE 5
EA – PSM40 – 6/10 – Arcade racing
An exceedingly average racer. Other titles are more worthy of your cash.

THEME HOSPITAL
EA – *PSM31* – 8/10 – Hospital sim
Quirky, amusing, very clever, sometimes frustrating.

THEME PARK
EA – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Business sim
Beautifully presented business game calling for patience and cunning.

THREE LIONS
BMG – *PSM33* – 8/10 – Football sim
Excellent football game, written by fans for fans.

✪ THUNDERHAWK 2
Core – *PSM3* – 8/10 – Combat flight sim
Frantic gameplay, mass destruction, interesting missions. Not at all bad.

TIGER SHARK
GTi – *PSM22* – 4/10 – Shoot 'em up
Dire and forgettable blaster with pretensions above its station.

TILT
EA – *PSM16* – 2/10 – Pinball
A disastrous attempt, lacking any real atmosphere or gameplay.

TIME COMMANDO
EA – *PSM10* – 6/10 – Adventure
Huge, graphically impressive yarn, compromised by fiddly controls.

TIME CRISIS
Namco – *PSM27* – 8/10 – 3D arcade shoot 'em up
The grooviest, bloodiest lightgun shoot 'em up there is.

TOBAL NO.1
SCEE – *PSM16* – 8/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Boasts a fluid frame-rate and sound grasp of 3D, but lacks authority.

✪ TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
Codemasters – *PSM27* – 9/10 – Racing simulation
Excellent: realistic and fun; great graphics, physics and sound. Plus amazing track and car detail.

✪ TOCA 2: TOURING CARS
Codemasters – *PSM40* – 9/10 – Racing simulation
An improvement on the original. It's still one of the best racing games out there and lots of fun.

TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE
THQ – *PSM19* – 7/10 – Racing game
Passable urban racer with the (sole) extra twist that you have to drive through city traffic.

✪ TOMB RAIDER
Core – *PSM13* – 10/10 – 3D adventure
The perfect balance of action and exploration. Popular heroine, too. At Platinum price, it's a must-have.

✪ TOMB RAIDER 2
Core – *PSM26* – 10/10 – 3D adventure
Who would have thought it could get better? But it has.

✪ TOMB RAIDER 3
Core – *PSM40* – 10/10 – 3D adventure
Incredible. Stunning. Massive. Brilliant. It'll keep you playing for literally months.

TOMBI
SCEE – *PSM36* – 8/10 – Platform
The extra treat of puzzles and bizarre logic make this game appealing. A welcome surprise.

TOMMI MÄKINEN RALLY
Europress – *PSM35* – 6/10 – Rally racer
Disappointing when compared to other racers.

TOP GUN
Ocean – *PSM10* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Reasonably proficient air combat sim. Not half as cheesy as the film.

TOTAL DRIVIN'
Ocean – *PSM25* – 8/10 – Racing game
A huge variety in tracks and cars but doesn't quite work as a single game.

TOTAL ECLIPSE
BMG – *PSM1* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
Yet another repetitive and frustrating 3D blaster. Shallow and pointless.

✪ TOTAL NBA '96
SCEE – *PSM3* – 9/10 – Basketball sim
The perfect combination of accuracy and playability. Sweet hoop dreams.

✪ TOTAL NBA '97
SCEE – *PSM19* – 9/10 – Basketball sim
Better motion capture and a few graphical tweaks keep *Total* on top.

TOTAL NBA '98
SCEE – *PSM34* – 8/10 – Basketball sim
Realism over ease of play, but up there with the best. That said, lacks ground-breaking new features.

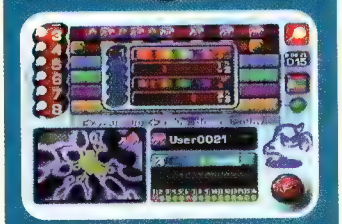
TRANSPORT TYCOON
Ocean – *PSM20* – 6/10 – Business management sim
You get to set up and run a transport network. Marginally more fun than it sounds.

TRASH IT
Rage – *PSM19* – 6/10 – Platform puzzler
Full of original stuff, but gameplay flaws and measly time limits kill it.

TREASURES OF THE DEEP
SCEE – *PSM35* – 7/10 – 3D underwater shoot 'em up
Treads the line between arcade and sim. Slow, but satisfyingly complex.

TRUE PINBALL
Ocean – *PSM4* – 7/10 – Yep, pinball

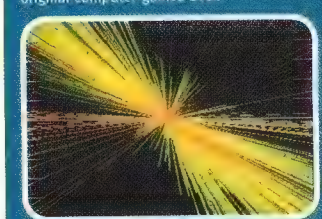
TOP FIVE MUSIC MAKERS



MUSIC
***PSM40* – 9/10 – Music creation**
We say: "It's worth buying a PlayStation just to run this superb bit of software."

FLUID
***PSM38* – 7/10 – Interactive music**
We say: "If your tastes lie with Celine Dion and Garth Brooks, avoid it."

PARAPPA THE RAPPER
***PSM23* – 8/10 – Rap 'em up**
We say: "Undoubtedly one of the most original computer games ever."



BABY UNIVERSE
***PSM38* – 4/10 – 3D Kaleidoscope**
We say: "An amusing enough trifle. But who wants to pay £30 for a trifle?"

BUST A GROOVE
***PSM38* – 8/10 – Dancing sim**
We say: "Almost arousing to watch. Sometimes repetitive to play."

PSM GAMES DIRECTORY

TOP FIVE

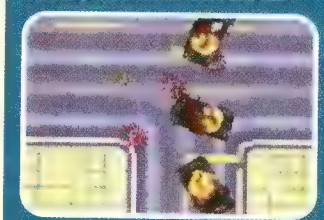
GORY!

RESIDENT EVIL 2
PSM31 – 9/10 – 3D Brain eating
Hoof it around the city of Raccoon splatting the undead and excavating zombie livers.

DOOM
PSM2 – 9/10 – First-person blood-letting
Man have gun. Man have chainsaw. Man have rocket launcher. MAN HAVE FUN.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3
PSM2 – 9/10 – Seminal makes 'em up
Of kneed groins, exploded elbows, slapped cheeks and splintered femurs. Yay!

BUSHIDO BLADE
PSM29 – 8/10 – Stab-happy slasher
The arcane art of the chopsocky kissed by the steely lips of Kitchen Devil-sin. Hai!



GRAND THEFT AUTO
PSM28 – 8/10 – Joy-riding cop killer
The inner city experience but with decidedly more deadness. Wear Kevlar when playing.

▶ A comprehensive simulation of the pinball experience with many modes.

TUNNEL B1
Ocean – *PSM10* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Visually accomplished blaster which frustrates as much as it engrosses.

TWISTED METAL
SCEE – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Driving game
A crash and smash treat for two players, but rather dull for one.

✪ TWISTED METAL 2
SCEE – *PSM17* – 9/10 – Crash 'em up
A one-off. Stuffed with detail and thrilling racing action and crashing.

U

ULTIMATE PARODIUS DELUXE
Konami – *PSM1* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Nostalgic 2D blaster. Belongs to an age where coin-ops were 10p a go.

UNHOLY WAR
Eidos – *PSM38* – 6/10 – Strategy/combat
Some good moments but ultimately of very little substance.

V

V2000
Grolier Interactive – *PSM38* – 7/10 – Strategic shoot 'em up
Not recommended for the inexperienced or casual gamer.

✪ V-RALLY
Ocean – *PSM21* – 9/10 – Racing game
Fine visuals and a plethora of tracks and cars combined to near excellence in this tricky racer.

✪ VANDAL-HEARTS
Konami – *PSM20* – 9/10 – RPG
A careful blend of rivetting plot, cute animation and great gameplay.

V-BALL: BEACH VOLLEY HEROES
GTi – *PSM34* – 8/10 – Arcade volleyball sim
A very pleasant surprise. Simple but lots of fun. Get a friend round.

VERSAILLES
Cryo – *PSM36* – 5/10 – Historical adventure
Occasionally clever, mostly dull, uninvolving and educational.

VICTORY BOXING
JVC – *PSM14* – 8/10 – Boxing sim
A thinking man's beat 'em up with plenty of long-term challenge.

VICTORY BOXING 2
JVC – *PSM38* – 8/10 – Boxing sim
The best boxing game around. Fight fans will love it.

VIEWPOINT
EA – *PSM2* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
Xevious-style isometric blaster with lush visuals. Not for the uninitiated.

VIGILANTE 8
Activision – *PSM34* – 7/10 – Driving combat game
Enjoyable in two-player mode, and sharp-looking. But *Twisted Metal 2* is much better.

VIPER
Ocean – *PSM35* – 6/10 – Flight shooter
Duff graphics and outdated gameplay. A waste of time.

VIRTUAL GOLF
Core – *PSM8* – 5/10 – Golf sim
Ugly as a pair of golfer's slacks, but challenging in the long term.

VIRTUAL POOL
Interplay – *PSM16* – 8/10 – Pool sim
Superbly presented and robustly playable. Lacks beer-stained baize.

VMX RACING
Funsoft – *PSM33* – 3/10 – Motorbike racing sim
Infuriating and tedious. The pits.

VR BASEBALL
Interplay – *PSM21* – 5/10 – Baseball sim
An unexciting and unemotional sim which is more laughable than real.

VS
THQ – *PSM34* – 7/10 – Beat 'em up
Not the best, but sufficiently different to be worth buying.

W

✪ WARCRAFT 2
EA – *PSM22* – 9/10 – Combat strategy
More depth and detail than *C&C* but perhaps not quite as addictive, with the same control problems

WARGAMES: DEFCON 1
EA – *PSM35* – 8/10 – Shoot 'em up
Unchallenging, but plenty of missions and dual scenarios.

WARGODS
GTi – *PSM22* – 3/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Little more than a terrible 3D version of *Mortal Kombat*. Rusty and rigid.

WARHAMMER
EA – *PSM12* – 8/10 – War game
A tough, challenging combination of war sim and God game.

WARHAMMER: DARK OMEN
EA – *PSM32* – 8/10 – Real-time strategy
Excellent fantasy strategy game with improved graphics and gameplay.

WARHAWK
SCEE – *PSM2* – 8/10 – Combat flight sim
Addictive and varied sim, providing a difficult, but rewarding experience.

WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY '98
GTi – *PSM31* – 4/10 – Ice hockey sim
Its inadequacies are many, its long-term appeal low.

WCW NITRO
THQ – *PSM34* – 5/10 – 3D wrestling sim
Disappointing. It's hamstrung by an uninspired control mechanism.

WCW VS THE WORLD
THQ – *PSM20* – 6/10 – Wrestling sim
Plenty of characters and great moves. The gameplay is flat and dull.

✪ WILD ARMS
SCEE – *PSM37* – 9/10 – RPG
Slick, polished and above all, fun. A must for any RPG fan.

WILD 9
Interplay – *PSM37* – 7/10 – Platformer
Outdated and not as good as many other platformers.

WILLIAMS ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS
GTi/Williams – *PSM7* – 7/10 – Retro compilation
Age shall not weary them. Not much anyway. *Defender* is still the biz.

WING COMMANDER III
EA – *PSM5* – 6/10 – Space combat
Great movie, great acting. Gameplay? Nope, they forgot that bit.

WING COMMANDER IV
EA – *PSM21* – 8/10 – Space combat
A huge improvement on the previous title. Plenty of scope and depth.

WING OVER
JVC – *PSM26* – 6/10 – Arcade flight sim
Nice idea, but average graphics and repetitive gameplay.

WIPEOUT
Psygnosis – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Racing game
Dizzying pyrotechnic racer set in the near-future. Marvellous soundtrack.

✪ WIPEOUT 2097
Psygnosis – *PSM12* – 9/10 – Racing game
Improved gameplay and brilliant link-up option keeps this ahead of all the racing rivals. Platinum? BUY!

✪ WORLD CUP 98
EA – *PSM34* – 9/10 – Football sim
Took a while to arrive, but this could be the ultimate footie sim.

WORLD CUP GOLF
Ocean – *PSM5* – 6/10 – Golf sim
Gets the basics right, but pales into insignificance next to *PGA Tour*.

WORLD LEAGUE BASKETBALL
Mindscape – *PSM30* – 5/10 – Basketball game
Incredibly short of greatness.

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER
Eidos – *PSM33* – 7/10 – Football sim
A player that's always a challenge. No flash, no licence – the business.

WORMS
Ocean – *PSM2* – 7/10 – Puzzle game
Much-admired for its originality but it lacks both visual style and lasting appeal.

WRECKIN CREW
Telstar – *PSM34* – 7/10 – Arcade style racer
A bright and pleasant change from simulation-style games. Not taxing, but fast and frantic.

WWF: IN YOUR HOUSE
Acclaim – *PSM15* – 5/10 – Wrestling sim
Captures the rank stupidity of the sport, but looks basic and aged.

WWF WAR ZONE
Acclaim – *PSM37* – 7/10 – Wrestling sim
A looker but let down by the usual wrestler faults. If only gameplay matched visuals. It still sells well.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA
Acclaim – *PSM2* – 8/10 – Wrestling sim
Amusing and more fun than other po-faced fighters of the time.

X

X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN
Microprose – *PSM1* – 8/10 – Strategy
Atmospheric and complex strategy title. Constantly demanding.

X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP
Microprose – *PSM14* – 8/10 – Strategy
Just as addictive and compelling in terms of gameplay as the first title.

XENOCRACY
Grolier Interactive – *PSM35* – 5/10 – Shoot 'em up
Too simple shooting. Disappointing game with disappointing graphics.

XEVIOUS 3D/G+
Namco – *PSM23* – 6/10 – Shoot 'em up
Four versions of the classic blaster including a slick 3D update.

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM
Acclaim – *PSM31* – 7/10 – 2D beat 'em up
Good PlayStation conversion of an arcade game that's showing its age.

X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER EX
Virgin – *PSM37* – 8/10 – Beat 'em up
Why settle for a stylised comic-book when you can have *Tekken 3*?

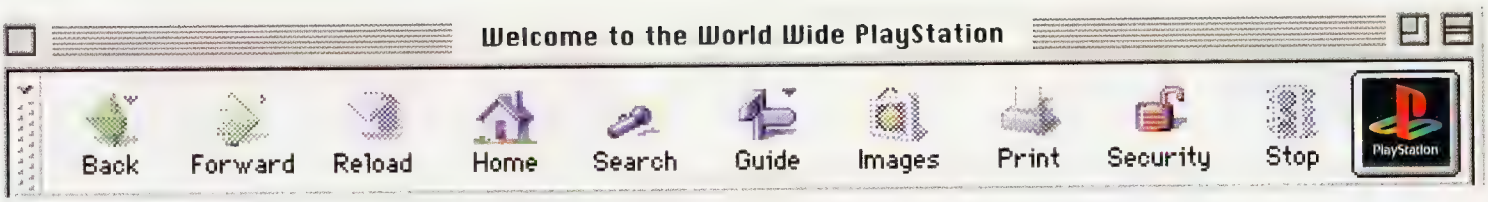
Z

Z
SCEE – *PSM29* – 7/10 – Real-time strategy game
Has its moments. But they are few.

ZERO DIVIDE
Ocean – *PSM4* – 7/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Innovative combat style makes up for a deficit of opening appeal.

ZERO DIVIDE 2
SCEE – *PSM39* – 5/10 – 3D beat 'em up
Average and pretty disappointing fighting game.

2XTREME
SCEE – *PSM17* – 6/10 – Skating sim
An almost unique sequel: it takes the original and ruins it.



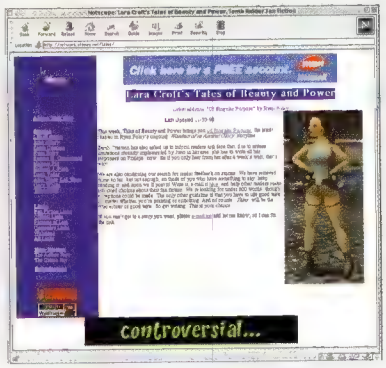
Short stories about Lara Croft? You can't be serious... Well, at least it's not poetry.

Are you sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin. Once upon a time there was this gun-toting, trigger-happy, adventurer...

LARA CROFT's SCRAPBOOK

This week, *Tales of Beauty and Power* brings you *Of Singular Purpose*, the latest chapter in Ryan Foley's ongoing *Wonders of an Ancient Glory* storyline." Yes, it's true. A small group of budding authors have collaborated to bring 'creative writing' to the Net. Creative writing with Lara *always* as the protagonist and the scenes of the *Tomb Raider* series *always* as the backdrop.

This self-professed no-nonsense, far-from-average Lara site provides access to all stories ever written for the page. These include *The Curse of Xingu*, which sees Lara searching for a lost city, and *A Plague of Dreams* in which a young Lara receives a mysterious book and has to then confront the evil it brings about. There are also links to the authors' home pages so you can let them know what you thought of their fan-fic. Apparently they are very popular among Crofties. Oh, and there is a guest book you can sign and leave a message in. A message like 'Lara Is the sex PlayStation God.' (Which one fan wrote.) Not exactly Croft Original.



It would seem that the regular visitors to this site enjoy gazing upon its aesthetically displeasing appearance, because there are few complaints. Maybe it's time you took a visit.

Nadine Pittam

WEB SITE *Tomb Raider* Tales – http://network.ctimes.net/tales/

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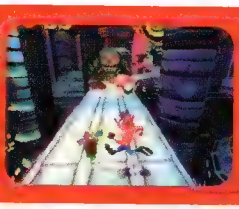
GAME CHARTS

Only a mind-blistered sasquatch, or an idiot, couldn't have predicted a premier showing from the basting lass. But even so, the remainder of the five toppermost of the hottermost is pregnant with big slammers. *FIFA '99* clouts it's way in, as do a pair of fine sequels and the virtually omnipresent Abraham. Good showings also from hip stealth fest *Tenchu* down at 13, *Nukem* at 18 and *Apocalypse* at 16, a title which is very literally da bomb. Slightly less reasonable however, is the deeply mundane *Small Soldiers*, which appears – by virtue of a licence tie-in undoubtedly – to be selling like heated pastry items.

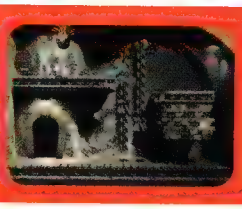
1 (NE) Tomb Raider 3 Eidos
The people have once again taken to this sassy sisterness like a bullet to a wolf's guts. Are you not surprised? Perhaps nay.

2 (NE) FIFA '99 EA
Projectile volleying of a curvilinear nature. Succeed through legging the aerated globule away from your own duel columns.



3 (NE) Crash Bandicoot 3 SCEE
Spring body-whiskered brute o'er apertures, fissures and various uninviting orifices. Scrump Pippins to attain existence.

4 (NE) TOCA 2 Codemasters
Impel your mechanised rectangle along a lubricous mud snake. Be stoic or risk spilling onto your roof and face areas.



5 (NE) Abe's Exoddus GT
Heroics in the raw. Skip-a-dee-do-dah over exploding metal pats and extricate friends with a penchant for suedette draws.

6	(5)	***Spyro The Dragon***	SCEE
7	(13)	***Gran Turismo***	SCEE
8	(4)	***Music***	Codemasters
9	(8)	***Tekken 3***	SCEE
10	(11)	***Colin McRae Rally***	Codemasters
11	(7)	***Formula 1 '98***	Psygnosis
12	(3)	***Cool Boarders 3***	SCEE
13	(9)	***Tenchu***	Activision
14	(NE)	***Actua Soccer 3***	Gremlin
15	(19)	***Tomb Raider 2***	Eidos
16	(NE)	***Apocalypse***	Activision
17	(17)	***Small Soldiers***	EA
18	(14)	***Duke Nukem: Time To Kill***	GTi
19	(16)	***Premier Manager '98***	Gremlin
20	(23)	***C&C Retaliation***	Virgin
21	(10)	***Michael Owen's WLS '99***	Eidos
22	(25)	***Actua Golf 3***	Gremlin
23	(20)	***MediEvil***	SCEE
24	(21)	***Resident Evil 2***	Virgin
25	(35)	***Monopoly***	Hasbro
26	(RE)	***World Cup '98***	EA
27	(27)	***Moto Racer 2***	EA
28	(30)	***Theme Hospital***	EA
29	(26)	***WWF War Zone***	Acclaim
30	(18)	***Colony Wars – Vengeance***	Psygnosis
31	(33)	***Constructor***	Acclaim
32	(29)	***NHL '99***	EA
33	(31)	***Point Blank***	SCEE
34	(40)	***Bust A Groove***	SCEE
35	(32)	***Future Cop: LAPD 2100***	EA
36	(28)	***Victory Boxing 2***	JVC
37	(22)	***ISS Pro '98***	Konami
38	(12)	***Breath Of Fire 3***	Infogrames
39	(RE)	***Alundra***	Psygnosis
40	(34)	***Madden NFL '99***	EA

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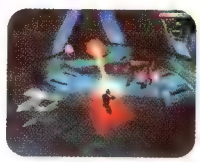
APOCALYPSE (*PSM40* – 8/10)

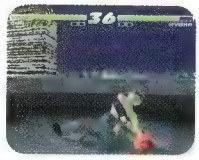


Barrel along as smooth-pated, ex-comedy private eye, eating people's skin off with warm lead pelletism. Expend whimsical wisecrackery to drag attention away from your inadequate dome.

MR OWEN'S WLS '99 (*PSM41* – 8/10)

The country's biggest adolescent scrapes his face off and Pritt-Sticks it to this bloated orb punt-about. Trip and the abrasive soil will be less than compassionate to your legs.

KENSEI: SACRED FIST (*PSM41* – 9/10)



As your Cuban heel creates a catastrophe of splintered incisors and jellied nostrils, merely brush the human residue from your John Smedley duel ply and machinate further mashing.

KNOCKOUT KINGS (*PSM41* – 8/10)

Sidle, flit and mince betwixt elastic lengths, upon pile-less carpetting. Remain perpendicular, as with refined, gentlemanly grace you banish the gift of sight from your foe through fisting.

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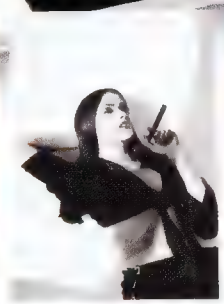

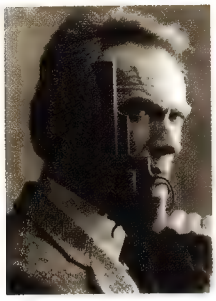

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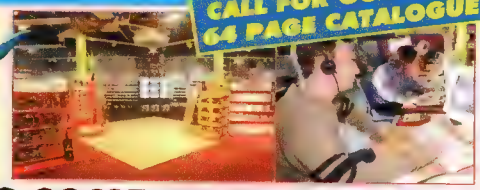

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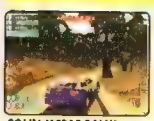
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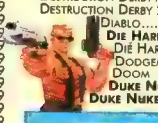

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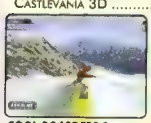
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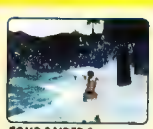
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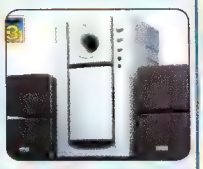

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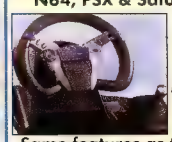

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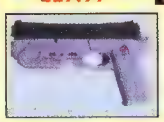

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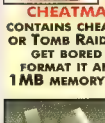

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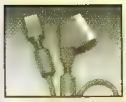

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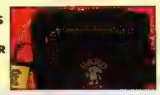

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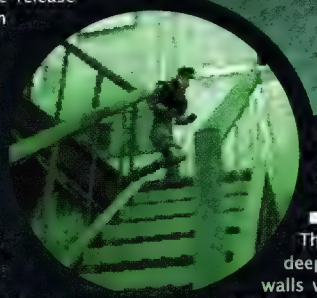
Metal Gear Solid

■ PUBLISHER: **Konami**

■ STYLE: **3D action/stealth**

■ PROGRAM: **Playable demo**

Tactical Espionage Action. That's *Metal Gear's* subtitle and it does exactly what it says on the box. You are top secret agent Snake sent to infiltrate an enemy base. Full frontal assault would be suicidal so instead stealth is your watchword as you creep about throttling lone sentries, dodging security cameras and disarming all manner of traps. Hailed on its Japanese release as one of the finest PlayStation games ever, the finished UK version certainly doesn't disappoint even if, for Western gamers, it lacks a little in the lifespan department. This is a game that blends action, exploration and puzzling with even more power and guile than *Tomb Raider 3*. No, really. This playable demo lets you explore the dock, the compound and even penetrate the base's defences. Run around the tank hanger dodging the many guards. Enter the first-floor basement. Avoid the Darpa chief in the cell block if you don't want the demo to end early. Oh, and be careful out there...



Fork-lift fans will love the rendering of their favourite machinery in the game. Just look at that beauty!

■ additional features

The finished game lets you explore deeper into the complex, blow holes in walls with explosive charges, take on tanks single-handed and battle an invisible ninja.

■ further information

You can find a massive in-depth review of *Metal Gear Solid* in this exact same magazine. Turn to page 80. And that's an order, soldier!

■ controls

D-Pad	Move
△	First-person view
✕	Crouch/crawl
□	Throw
○	Attack
L2	Inventory
SELECT	Access Codec phone

Despite what these screenshots might imply there are other colours to *Metal Gear* besides green. Play it and see for yourself.

Devil Dice

■ PUBLISHER: SCEE
■ STYLE: 3D puzzler
■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

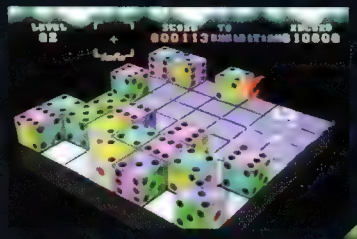
We always knew that puzzle games were the work of the devil but this dose of madness from Sony just proves our point. *Devil Dice* takes the idea of lining up blocks to make them disappear one step beyond the sane with six-sided dice manipulated by a chirpy looking imp. The basic idea is to line up the numbered faces to match the number of dice arranged in a vertical or horizontal line. In practice this gets pretty complicated as quickly rolling up an adjacent block with the same number uppermost results in an even bigger detonation and single-dotted dice can only be removed with a nearby implosion. Let a die vanish beneath you and you'll be stuck on the playing surface (where you can push dice about) and can only re-ascend by standing on a die as it is raised.

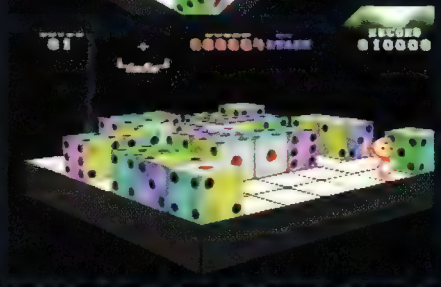
■ controls

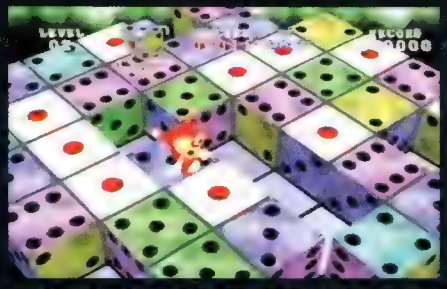
D-Pad	Move dice
L1/L2	Change view (Puzzle mode only)

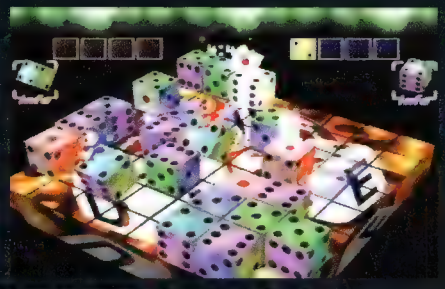
■ additional features
The complete game of *Devil Dice* can involve up to five players in the War mode or host a two-player head-to-head in Battle mode (not included in this demo version). Strewth.

■ further information
Devil Dice was reviewed in *PSM4* where it received a not-bad score of 7/10 and was described as "Definitely a game for the hardcore."









Lock horns with Satan and tease and toss the numbered cubes of the Devil! Opposite sides add up to seven – important tip, that.

Cool Boarders 3

■ PUBLISHER: SCEE
■ STYLE: Snowboarding sim
■ PROGRAM: Playable demo

When Sony passed the torch of its alpine racer on to new boys 989 Studios some wondered whether it was third time unlucky for piste fans. How many sequels could really be turned out? Happily, while this *Boarders* part trois does take a slightly different line from its predecessors it's just as much fun. The Downhill is made superbly treacherous by swathes of trees, rocks and cabins dotted across the wide courses along with jumps, rivers of ice and the odd snow plough. You might find the controls a little heavy at first but given some time (and possibly an analogue pad to make the controls feel smoother) the rhythmic swishage will begin to grow on you. This demo gives you a taste of the superbly designed Downhill section with one full course. Have fun, dude person!.

■ controls

D-Pad	Move board
◎	Jump
□	Sharp turn
L1/L2	Punch right/left
R2	Switch position
R1	Slow descent

■ additional features
The full game features some 30 excellent courses spread across five mountains. There are 23 snowboards, 20 boarders as well as Halfpipe, Big Air and Slalom events to try.

■ further information
Cool Boarders 3 was reviewed in *PSM40* and received 8/10 where our reviewer deemed it "excellent." We can but only agree and say it's top.

Nicking the wheels off skateboards makes them slide through snow. True!

Max Power Racing

■ PUBLISHER: **Infogrames**
■ STYLE: **Arcade driving sim**
■ PROGRAM: **Playable demo**

The follow-up to the under-rated *Total Drivin'*, *Max Power Racing* merges the arcade and simulation ends of the racing spectrum to deliver a fast and dangerous drive. The unique feature of *Max Power Racing* is that in the later stages some of the hazards are lethal – a plunge off a bridge will result in your immediate elimination from the race. In this demo such antics will only be punished with a time penalty. Here you get to race on a US track in the desert – be sure not to veer off-track as you ford the river.

■ controls
←,→ Steer
⊗ Accelerate
□ Brake
○ Handbrake
SELECT Change view

■ additional information
The finished game features 30 tracks spread across 10 international locations. You get to drive 25 cars from a sure-footed Renault Clio to the low-grip high-speed *Max Power* car.

■ further information
We dish the dirt on Infogrames' latest racer in this very publication. Also check out page 13 and learn how the best racers can win a huge widescreen telly!

Take a touch of *Gran Turismo* and a whiff of Namco-style *Racer* action and whip the pair into a light, puce fondue. Stir and serve in a glass labelled *Max Power*.

V-2000

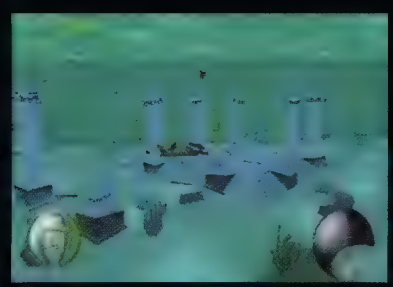
■ PUBLISHER: **Grolier**
■ STYLE: **Strategic shoot 'em up**
■ PROGRAM: **Playable demo**

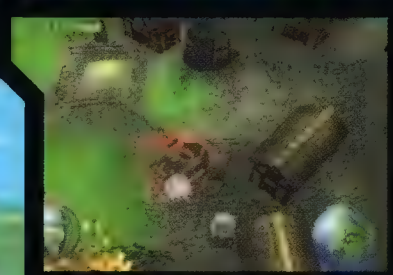
Trainspotters will bang on for hours about the virtues of 3D *Defender*-homage *Virus* and now's your chance to see if the sequel, *V-2000*, is a classic. Featuring in its Full Flight mode one of the most original control systems ever, your job is to halt the advance of an alien virus by frazzling the hordes of mutants it creates. Your craft is shown from an outside view and there are two control methods on offer, the default Hovering mode and the trickier but more sophisticated Full Flight mode. In Full Flight mode your ship behaves like a Harrier Jump Jet so thrusting while horizontal will make you ascend while applying the throttle while tipped forward or back will speed you up/slow you down. Get practising, pilot!

■ controls
←/→ Bank left/right
□ Forward thrust
○ Backwards thrust
⊗ Fire
↓/↑ Raise/lower guns

■ additional information
In the finished game you may need to save a certain number of humans, or transport people to different installations.

■ further information
Want to know more? Then look no further than *PSM38* for the words and pictures coupled with a score of 7/10 and the comment "not recommended for the inexperienced or casual gamer."





Put the hours in, experiment with the controls and the world around you. You'll grow to love it.

S.C.A.R.S.

■ PUBLISHER: **Ubi Soft**
■ STYLE: **Diddy racing**
■ PROGRAM: **Playable demo**

If you're after an antidote to the po-faced realism of *Colin McRae Rally* and *Gran Turismo* then *S.C.A.R.S.* could be a breath of fresh exhaust fumes. In the complete version up to four players can race against each other on nine varied tracks ranging from an undersea obstacle course to a mad dash across the desert. The differences between the cars are a big part of the game's appeal whether you pick the slow but sure Mammoth or the fast but slidey Rhino. There are sensible power-ups to collect like missiles, shields and turbos as well as the barmier stinger, stopper and magnet weapons.

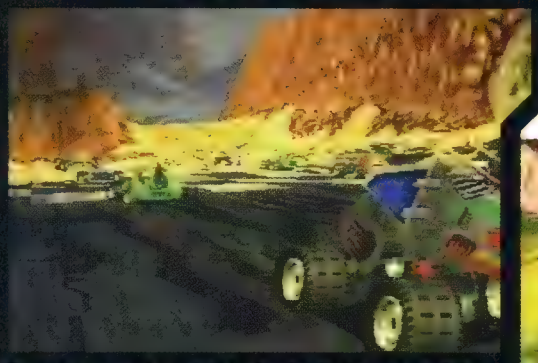
■ controls

←,→	Steer
⊗	Accelerate
◎	Brake
R1	Fire weapon
R2	Swap weapon
△	Change view
○	Headlights

■ additional information
The version of *S.C.A.R.S.* available in the shops features six different characters and three playing modes. You can even create your own custom competition.

With a clear road ahead you've the perfect opportunity to build your lead.

■ further information
S.C.A.R.S. scored 8/10 in our review in *PSM36* where you'll find the lowdown on this accomplished arcade racer.



Forget any madness of 'animals that can turn into cars' and get on with the frantic karting at hand.

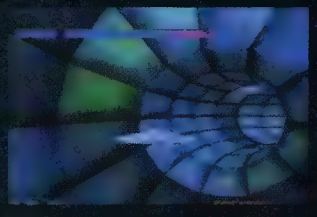
Yaroze Hall Of Fame

Between The Eyes

■ PUBLISHER: **Not for release (Yaroze)**
■ STYLE: **Arcade racer**
■ PROGRAM: **Full game**

Travel very fast through some psychedelic, patchwork tubing, avoiding the sides, in a manta ray-shaped craft. Difficult, but quite remarkable and fun once you get the hang of it. Ooooh, feel those colours baby!

■ controls
D-Pad Move craft



Blitter Boy

■ PUBLISHER: **Not for release (Yaroze)**
■ STYLE: **Arcade blaster**
■ PROGRAM: **Full game**

Walk into babies to make them follow you, then – blasting ghosts – lead them to the teleporter exit.

■ controls

D-Pad	Move
⊗	Fire forward
◎	Jump
□	Run
R1 + R2	Strafe

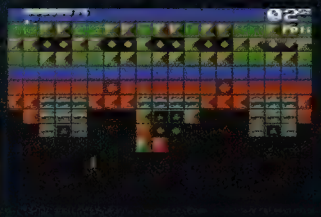
Bouncer 2

■ PUBLISHER: **Not for release (Yaroze)**
■ STYLE: **Arcade**
■ PROGRAM: **Full game**

Keep your tiny humans bouncing higher and higher as long as possible. This is a case of knocking the blocks in a homage to the wrinkly *Arkanoid*.

■ controls

←,→	Move see-saw
△	Launch bouncer
⊗	Swap position



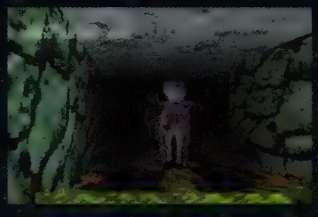
Clone

■ PUBLISHER: **Not for release (Yaroze)**
■ STYLE: ***Doom* clone**
■ PROGRAM: **Full game**

Doom was bound to spawn a Yaroze effort some time, and here it is. Run about a claustrophobic maze blasting semi-transparent, ropy zombies. Spooky!

■ controls

D-Pad	Move
⊗	Fire
◎	Map

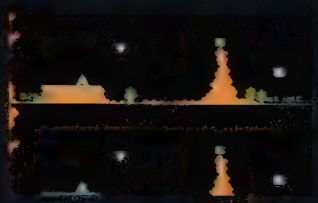


Gravitation

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: *Thrust* clone
■ PROGRAM: Full game

The classic *Thrust* given the two-player treatment. How cool? Very.

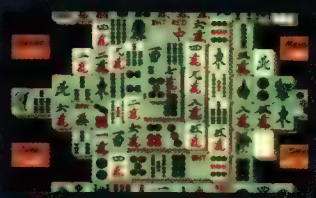
■ controls
←,→ Rotate
⊗ Thrust
◎ Fire



Mah Jongg

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Oriental puzzler
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Match tiles by clicking on the uppermost tiles or those at the edge of the playing area. The idea is to clear the board of tiles as quickly as possible. Press and hold Select on title screen for details of the controls.

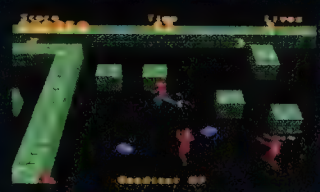


Haunted Maze

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: 3D spooky maze game
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Think of *Pac-Man* with zombies instead of ghosts and you'll get the idea of what this game's about. Just run about using the D-Pad.

■ controls
D-Pad Move

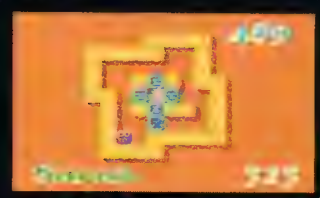


Pushy 2

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Puzzle
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Use your blob to push boxes over the crosses, which then vanish, enabling you to move up to the next level. Addictive!

■ controls
D-Pad Move



Psychon

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Shoot 'em up
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Enjoy a sort of futuristic *Gauntlet*

■ controls
D-Pad Move
⊗ Shoot

Hover Car Racing

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Mini racer
■ PROGRAM: Full game

A stripped-down *Micro Machines*.

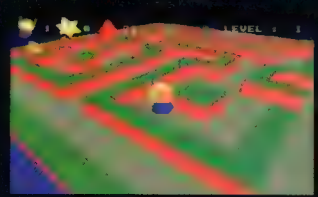
■ controls
D-Pad Move
⊗ Accelerate
▭ Activate weapon

Coneman

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: *Pacman*-ish puzzler
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Navigate a 3D maze dodging ghosts and eating pills. *Pac* is most definitely back.

■ controls
D-Pad Move
⊗ Raise camera
△ Lower camera
◎ Move camera over coneman
◎ Move camera behind coneman
▭ Close view
▭ Far view



Rocks 'n' Gems

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Arcade/strategy
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Collect diamonds and avoid being crushed by rocks. Just like the old fave *Boulderdash* it's all against the clock. Collect the gems before the ever stricter time-limit expires and gain access to the next level. What starts as a simplistic bit of fun becomes a life-hogging quest for victory. Quite possibly the trickiest (and the best) game on show here.

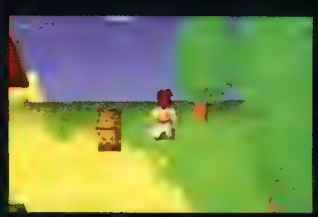
■ controls
D-Pad Move

Terra Incognita

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: RPG
■ PROGRAM: Full game

Pick up boxes, throw boxes, jump in the air, wave your sword and explore your way around this arcane Japanese RPG.

■ controls
D-Pad Move
◎ Interact

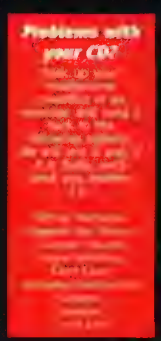


Total Soccer

■ PUBLISHER: Not for release (Yaroze)
■ STYLE: Footie sim
■ PROGRAM: Full game

A brilliant *Sensible Soccer* clone, with different players' names.

■ controls
D-Pad Move
⊗ Pass, tackle, shoot
△ Strategy & substitutes
◎ Replay



A Bug's Life

■ PUBLISHER: SCEE
■ STYLE: 3D Adventure
■ PROGRAM: Video

Your chance to see just how gorgeous this platformer for the young and young at heart is shaping up to be. Based on the Disney film, you control an ant called Flik who has to jump on bulbs, collect pellets and traverse the warren-like tunnels of the ants' nest without getting eaten by beetles, mantises and worms.

Metal Gear

■ PUBLISHER: Konami
■ STYLE: 3D stealth/action
■ PROGRAM: Video

We just can't get enough of Konami's secret agent sim and just to prove what great moments await in the full game we've got a special video segment of our Solid Snake in action. Can anyone spot the poetic license used at the end of the video? Write in to *PSM at* the usual address if you can.

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feedback

THIS MONTH: THRILL SEEKERS, CHEATED FOR CHEATS, BEDTIME STORIES, PUTTING OUT RUBBISH, POSTER ENVY, SPINDLE DOCTORS, AND SOME...

KILLING THRILLS

Once again, the games industry has chosen to treat us like children. I thought the PlayStation was at the forefront of creating games for older games players such as myself. Yet it is insulting to think that in this day and age I am still not allowed to choose for myself what I should and shouldn't play. What am I talking about? *Thrill Kill*.

According to your information, Electronic Arts had purchased "various Virgin Interactive properties." You then went on to say that the game in question would not be released on grounds of "decency and taste" (both of which are subjective things). Now, I have no objection to being careful about the subject matter of games being suitable for the correct age ranges. By all means, give the game a strict age certificate, slap as many "not suitable for children" stickers on it as you want, restrict the number of outlets it is sold at, but for heaven's sake, release the damn game! There are those of us who are not so easily offended and are mature enough to know that it's just a game! From what I could see the game had a "twisted" humour about the whole thing: it's not like it was advocating a way of life or something. I don't think people will be playing the game and suddenly thinking "Hey, I think I'll just go beat someone up whilst dressed as a midget on stilts!" But, if they do then I very much doubt the problem lies with the game.

I am just like any other person. The games in my home would take pride of place in any PlayStation owner's collection. *Gran Turismo, Resident Evil 2, Final Fantasy VIII, Tekken 3, ISS Pro '98, Bust-A-Move, Wipeout 2097* and so on. All quality games, you will agree no doubt and, with the exception of *Resident Evil 2*, none of which could be claimed as overly violent or disturbing. For me, a game does not have to be brimming over with blood and gore, but if it is then leave it be!

Phillip GW Smith

Yet again, it is the concept of censorship that is the issue here, rather than specific games, or indeed, films, art or literature. While moaning that *Thrill Kill* may never see the light of day you ignore the

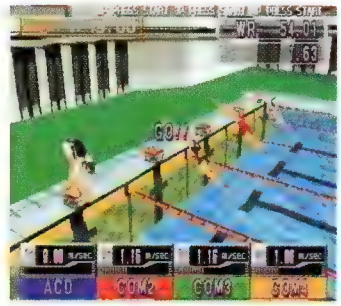
POKE ME

I am writing to say how appalled I am with the cheats in the PlayStation magazine. The cheats pages only show the more popular games and new releases, for example *WWF War Zone, Grand Theft Auto* and *Gran Turismo* – no PlayStation magazine I have purchased has shown any less popular games. By the less popular I mean games less talked about among some friends, for example *Soviet Strike, Lone Soldier* and *International Track And Field*. I have purchased five PlayStation magazine copies now and not one shows the cheats some people might need. On the other hand I have purchased two copies of a different magazine that show me everything I need to know. If no action is taken towards this matter I shall never waste five pounds of pocket money, which I have saved, on a pointless magazine. However, I would ask you to reply to this letter and if something is to be done or not to be done I would like to know about it. Also before I conclude many of my friends say the same thing that no cheats we really need are put in the *Official PlayStation Magazine*.

John Henderson
Tyne & Wear

PSM STAR LETTER

Unfortunately the answer we must give is rather similar to that of the previous letter. It's all about spacial restrictions. While it may not feel like it to you, more people actually want help on the current big games. And after running coverage on them, we are at a loss for space. Help for you, comes in the form of *The Official Tips Magazine*. A quarterly tomb, absolutely heaving with all manner of hintery. It covers the older titles too, so worry not John, assistance with the more archaic elements of the PlayStation's oeuvre, is just a trip to the newsagent away.



If you want a dedicated cheats magazine on older games look out for *Official PlayStation Tips Magazine*.

Letters

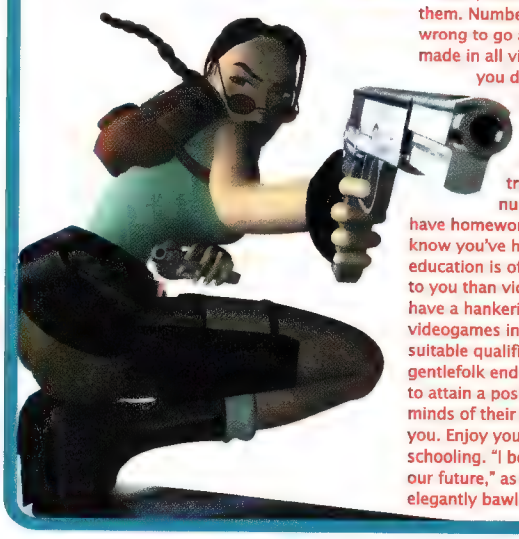
LESSONS IN STRIFE

I am writing to commend you on your recently published review of *Tomb Raider 3*, which was well worth every dollop of ink used. It confirmed my suspicions that this will be *the* game which I will dream of being in my stocking come 25 December, along with, of course, a Dual Shock analog controller. But *TR3*'s superb review is not the only point which I wish to bring to your attention. Oh no! On reading some of your last few mags I have decided that, with all of the coming game releases, such as *FFVIII*, I have decided that I need to be allowed to play my PlayStation until at least 10 o'clock, (in preference to only an hour or two per night, if I have no homework.

I have decided to choose your mag to convey this message to my parents as I trust you sincerely, even though I have only been a reader for a mere four months.

Yours desperately,
Stuart Taylor (aged 14)

STAR LETTER



While we offer commiserations on your house-rules, we, on the other hand, cannot help but agree with them. Number one: we would be wrong to go against the suggestion made in all videogame manuals that you don't play the game for longer than an hour, before a 15 minute break. This is a health warning and should be treated with respect. And number two: whether you have homework or not (and yes, we know you've heard this drone before) education is of far more consequence to you than videogames. Even if you have a hankering to get into the videogames industry you will need suitable qualifications. All the PSM gentlefolk endured years of academia to attain a position among the greatest minds of their generation. And so must you. Enjoy your gaming and enjoy your schooling. "I believe the children are our future," as Whitney Houston elegantly bawled. *PSM* must agree.

ENTERPRISING KIRK

I am writing to say how rubbish the new layout of the magazine is, now don't get me wrong, it was good until you changed it. On your tips page you only show one or two games at a time. But there are some good changes like your A-Z of games and your top five games of different types like sports, shoot 'em ups and so on. Now I have put my point across I can't wait for the mag to get better.

Kirk Ingram,
Essex

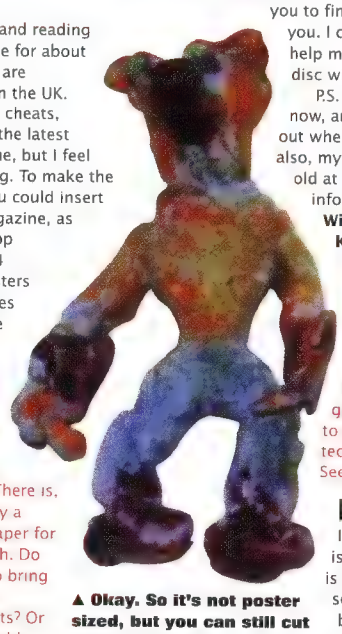
"How rubbish." Your words. You then say we show one or two games on the tips pages. Yes, we concentrate heavily on some of the big titles, but you fail to point out that there are further pages with more general tips provided. Last issue carried assistance for 12 games. Two games, you say. Yet 12 games are clearly visible on the pages, if you count them. You then go on to praise the rest of the mag and inform all that your point has been well and truly put across. What point? That you are wrong? That you can't count? Really, how rubbish.

POST-IT NOTE

I've been collecting and reading PlayStation magazine for about a year now and you are obviously the best in the UK. The latest previews, cheats, facts and demos of the latest games make this true, but I feel something is missing. To make the magazine better, you could insert posters into the magazine, as I've observed that top football, PC and N64 magazines have posters and I think this makes them better than the competition.

Richard Cracknell
Bucks

The thing is Richard, it all boils down to economics. (doesn't it always). There is, believe it or not, only a certain amount of paper for us to use each month. Do we use said paper to bring readers more news, PrePlays and PlayTests? Or do we use, what would essentially amount to eight pages, to produce a double sided Crash/Lara wall mount? We feel readers would soon tire of a reduction in hard information, so currently we have no plans to produce a regular poster. In short: Sorry.



▲ Okay. So it's not poster sized, but you can still cut him out and pin him up.

SPINDLY KILLER SIS

I am really hacked off at the moment because I have found my PlayStation broken, and naturally I blamed my sister but she insists that it wasn't her. Anyway, the part that is broken is the small plastic spindle, which the PlayStation game CD sits on. I have asked a lot of PlayStation wizards at school about how much it would cost to get a new small black spindle and they say I might have to buy a new metal thing to sit inside the PlayStation. They told me that it may set me back around £30 (which I haven't had in a long time). Please help find someone who can sell me the small plastic thing for a few pounds. It would be interesting for you to find out, as it may happen to you. I can't ask you enough, to help me find just a small plastic disc with three balls on.

P.S. My sister has confessed now, and she said it just came out when removing the CD. And also, my PlayStation is two years old at Christmas, if this information is useful.

William James
Kent

The best thing we can do is to refer you to the Sony Careline. The number is 0990 998877 and is populated with a bunch of very helpful gentlefolk who will be able to assist on all types of technological conundrums. Seek them out.

DEPTH CHARGE

I have all but the first issue of your mag, and this is the second letter I have sent to you, the first one being on the topic of stupid letters being printed, a bit like this one I suppose. I am referring to the letter I have just read today, 25 November, entitled, "LACKING DEPTH" by Chris Montgomery. The topic was how the people in the crowd in videogames, appear as "cardboard cut-outs'.

Well funnily enough I have been thinking about this topic for ages, and have come up with a way of solving the problem, at least for racing games, which are my favourites. Why don't the programmers simply put the cardboard cut-outs in the game, but make them only appear when the player's car reaches a certain speed. The rest of the time the crowd becomes animated, but only slightly to allow the game's speed to stay at its best possible.

An example of this is at the start of the race, when the player can actually see the crowd, and it appears to be moving and watching the action, then, say when the car is travelling at a speed greater than 30mph, the crowd becomes cardboard again. As this is the time when the player doesn't actually pay attention to the crowd. Then, if the player crashes into the scenery where there is a crowd member, the said spectator will look better because the speed of the gamer's car will be less than 30mph.

Kevin Preston,
Cornwall

A nice idea. It seems to solve the problem well. Of course though, there is a 'but'! In order to create code which would firstly generate animated 3D polygonal figures and secondly, code which would tell your PlayStation when to display the different types of crowd, memory would be needed. Memory which, when lost, may force the quality of in-game graphics down, or indeed effect the way the thing actually plays. This would perhaps be rather more detrimental to a PlayStation game than a group of overly thin spectators. That said, it remains an interesting premise. Developers take note.

UNDER 12S

I have a suggestion to improve your magazine. Why don't you get together a group of Under 12s and ask them to write about games for the under 12s. Because they are under 12 they know what other under 12s want and will enjoy.

Marc Fitzgibbon
Cardiff

Your letter is unfortunately the reason why the under 12s don't write for the under 12s about games the under 12s might be interested in. You used the phrase under 12s four times in 46 words. 'Fraid it doesn't make for great reading. Perhaps you might be interested in our brand new sister title *PlayStation Max* which does, very much, cater for the under 12s.

FORMULAIC

Having just read the Feedback section of *PSM40*, I feel compelled to write, in order to express my utter contempt for both you and the screaming loonies who write in to your filthy magazine.

Obviously anyone who writes to magazines of this type is either totally mental or seriously deranged (or both) and deserve nothing less than a life of degradation and mud eating. The only reason I got your magazine in the first place was because the animal on the cover fooled me into thinking it was a natural history mag. However, it took me no more than 200 pages to realise that it was in fact some kind of disgusting pastime mag for spotty friendless idiots, bereft of love, lives and sanity.

Why a decent company like Future Publishing would allow scum like you to produce this tripe is, frankly, beyond me,, and both you and your sweaty in-bred readership deserve to be locked in a cellar till all your bits drop off.

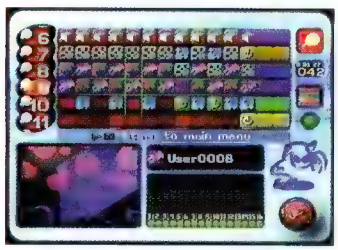
Also, when is *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* due out?

ANON

The build. The build. It's building. Nearly there. Bammo! The pay off. Well done, you have mastered the basic equation of comedy. You are well up there with Billy Pearce and maybe even Mike McClean, Britain's top Children's TV presenter.

MUSIC SOUNDS BETTER WITHOUT YOU

Music?... I suppose you could call it that but I've got a better name for it. Crap. Lets fact it, 90 per cent of the prerecorded riffs and baselines are cheesier than a wedge of Stilton. The riff editor was a good idea as it allowed you to get around this... But what about the drumloops? Oh dear. I heard better beats the time my grandma



fell down the stairs. Why couldn't a drum machine feature have been included instead of the tacky Cyber Space videos?

The riff editor and a drum machine option would've made the game worth buying as it would've let you totally avoid all the embarrassing sounds and beats altogether. I know *Fluid* doesn't compare to the sequencing side of *Music* but at least you could come up with something sounding half decent and not like a demo on a Bontempi keyboard. And who had the idea of putting in the cringe-worthy vocal samples? No one wants to make a tune with some prat with an even more annoying voice than the DJ off *Cool Boarders 2*, surely!... GRAAAVITY! Oh dear me!

Krum
Rochdale, Lancs

There was no suggestion within the review that *Music* was an amalgamation of all that is Black Twang, Depth Charge or Banaczech. It was merely pointed out that should one fancy the chance to have a go at creating some inoffensive dance vibes, one could. It's a harmless enough piece of software and judging by its performance recently in the software charts, it has brought pleasure to many.

SILENT NOISE

STAR LETTER

I'm more of a guitarist than a gaming enthusiast, but that's not to say I don't take an interest in your magazine, which my brother buys every month. So I was seeing what was on your demo disk when I came across that video of *Silent Hill*. The graphics were incredible, but what really stood out was the music. I listened to it again as I thought it was brilliant. So who's it by and where can I get it?

Phil Ward
Manchester

The Sound Director is one Akira Yamaoka and the music CD will certainly be released in Japan. So you could import it. Or, if the game is a big enough hit, it could warrant an English CD release too. So there you go.

DAFT FUNK

I am writing to you on behalf of a work colleague of mine, Mr Aaron Toop. He claims that you can play a PlayStation game and a music CD at the same time on one PlayStation. Myself and numerous other work colleagues have told him and have explained that it is impossible to do that. His theory is that you load up your game and once it is loaded, you take it out and replace it with the music CD. Then, once the music CD has loaded in, take it out and replace it with the game CD. I know that this cannot be done, and have told him. Yet he will not believe me (or anybody else). Please could you print this letter in your magazine with the obvious answer.

Oliver Gillas
Berkshire

I'm very much afraid it is you that are wrong. Sort of. With *some* games the practice of substituting the game disk with that of a music CD will reap audible rewards. Certain games load all the level information in one go. Now, if during play the disk is accessed for merely audio files, it matters little what sounds are in the machine. When the PlayStation comes to a digital impasse, the game will have to be replaced, to allow loading of the next section.

All letters submitted are assumed to be for publication unless marked otherwise. We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of space or clarity. Sorry we can't answer any letters personally.

Sarah Blackie's tenuous liason with the rules of vorticism inspire agonising pleasure in the viewer.

NEXT MONTH IN PSM43

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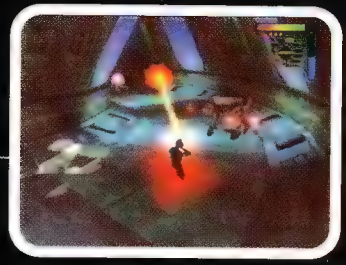

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JUST THE FAX

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Best known for his programming work for Grooverider's Mysteries Of Funk LP, funk-fuelled drum'n'bassist Optical is set to make 1999 his own with the release of Wormhole. Co-collaborating with the similarly feted Ed Rush, Wormhole is a mighty slab of dark junglist action riddled with spooksome samples and filthy basslines. Still, all work and no play makes Optical a dull fella so *PSM* caught up with him for a chat about *Metal Gear*, *Manic Miner* and playing Resi with his nostrils...

So what was the first game you ever bought?

You're taking me back now. Jet Set Willy was my favourite on the Spectrum, an unforgettable game and one which signalled the start of my gaming addiction

We recently interviewed the Jungle Brothers and the Freestylers who consider themselves a bit tasty. Reckon you could take 'em on?

Ha! I can whip 'em all together with my hands tied and just using my nose! At the moment I'm perfecting my game strategies and tactics for this kind of thing. Just set me a date and time and I'll be there. Showdown time!

Have any game samples ever slipped into your work?

No samples in there yet. I haven't really heard any sounds that would really suit my work. If I found a really good sample and it fitted with the tracks I'd definitely use it, but only if I could get away with it.

What games are you after at the moment?

Why, you gonna give them to me? Fifa 99 should be very nice thanks you. I'll give you an address so you can send it to me!

Would you ever turn your talents to writing game music?

I'd give my right arm to compose a score for a game. Photek did it really well on WipeOut, it fitted the game down to a tee. I could do it as well. I would love to compose a score for a game like Resident Evil and I'd make it even more moody and atmospheric.

What do you reckon to Metal Gear Solid?

Wicked game! Can't beat it, only I reckon it's a little short, could have been a lot longer but that doesn't stop the enjoyment. I got my copy from Japan when I was over there last. They get games months before us.

Fave ever drum'n'bass tune?

Anything by Ditlinja

What does 1999 hold for Mr Optical then?

99 is the year. Glastonbury in the dance tent, Creamfields, Japan, Australia and the U.S will get a real earful as well so that should be entertaining! Look out for the Planet V album out on V Recordings, more stuff on Virus Recordings and of course the Wormhole album

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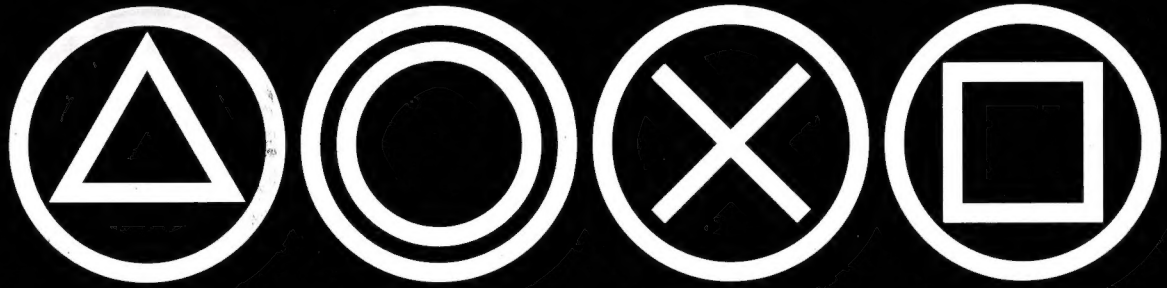

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